

Improving farm productivity in UK and Canada: apply for funding

Agriculture is facing a major challenge to feed a global population of around 9 billion by 2050.

Food producers must grow more food but in a way that is more sustainable and efficient and that reduces pollution, minimises waste and improves soil condition.

Both the UK and Canada recognise the economic importance of agriculture and have been working together to identify areas of mutual interest.

The Canadian and UK agri-food sectors were worth C\$108.1 billion and £109 billion respectively in 2014. The UK Government's Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund Transforming Food Production Challenge has up to £90 million to help businesses invest in new data-driven precision-agriculture technologies that could transform food production.

Innovate UK, as part of UK Research and Innovation, has up to £2 million from the fund to invest in innovative research and development projects that involve UK businesses working with partners in Canada.

Partner businesses in Canada must be registered small or medium-sized enterprises with fewer than 500 employees and will receive funding from the [National Research Council of Canada Industrial Research Assistance Program International](#)

Projects should aim for net zero emissions

Projects must be in line with the aims of the transforming food production challenge including the use of data-driven precision approaches and contributing towards a target of net zero agriculture emissions by 2040.

They should aim to bring new businesses and technologies into the UK and Canadian agriculture sectors and show they have taken account of the needs of farmers and growers. They can be in crop, livestock and aquaculture systems.

Funding will support projects that:

- combine digital technologies, artificial intelligence, the application of big data and engineering solutions with biological, environmental or social science to drive productivity
- develop technologies and solutions that connect farms and supply chains
- transfer technology from another sector into agriculture, providing this requires innovation

Competition information

- the competition is open, and the deadline for applications is at 5pm on 20 May 2020
 - UK businesses of any size may apply, and projects can be led by a UK or Canadian business
 - we expect the maximum grant for UK partners in a project will be £400,000
 - briefing events will be held online on 11 February and in Birmingham on 13 February 2020
-

[PM meeting with President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya: 21 January 2020](#)



The Prime Minister met Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta at Downing Street this afternoon.

President Kenyatta was in London to attend yesterday's UK-Africa Investment Summit.

The Prime Minister welcomed the listing of Kenya's first green bond at the London Stock Exchange which took place yesterday.

The leaders agreed on the need for a new strategic partnership between the UK and Kenya. They particularly emphasised the importance of collaboration on climate change, ahead of COP26.

They also discussed concerns regarding the threat from Al Shabaab and the need to work together to promote safety and security in the region.

Published 21 January 2020

UK-Kenya Strategic Partnership

2020-2025

As Commonwealth nations and champions of the rules-based international system, Kenya and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland enjoy a deep, diverse and historic relationship. It is anchored by a shared set of values and a mutual understanding of the benefits that can accrue from our strong bilateral collaboration.

On 21 January, we – His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta and Prime Minister Boris Johnson – agreed to elevate this relationship to an even more ambitious Strategic Partnership between our two countries. This will allow us to focus our collective expertise, resources and leadership on the priorities – bilateral, regional and global – that will help deliver more prosperous, secure and sustainable societies.

From 2020 to 2025, we will work together across five pillars – mutual prosperity, security and stability, sustainable development, climate change, and people to people – reflecting the key challenges and opportunities of our time.

The UK and Kenya already benefit from close economic ties and under the first pillar – mutual prosperity – we will increase their breadth and strength, boosting growth and improving living standards. Capitalising on initiatives launched by the UK in January 2020 – backed by £400 million of UK aid and with the potential to generate billions of pounds of investment into Africa from the City of London – our countries will develop new investment and trade opportunities that will support businesses, including those in the Blue Economy, and create jobs. A focus on quality investments and improving environmental, social and corporate standards will ensure sustainable growth. This, combined with the delivery of ongoing business reforms, will put us in a strong position to build on over £1.35 billion of private British investment into Kenya confirmed at the UK-Africa Investment Summit on 20 January 2020.

Building on the success achieved under the High-Level UK-Kenya Security Compact, pillar two of the Strategic Partnership will add fresh impetus to our joint efforts to tackle global terrorism, violent extremism, organised crime and corruption. The UK and Kenya will also help reduce local, regional and international drivers of conflict; improve the cyber resilience of our societies, economies and democratic institutions; and further enhance our longstanding defence cooperation.

Pillar three – focussing on sustainable development – sets the shared goal of reducing extreme poverty and creating a more prosperous, safer and healthier Kenya, by building stability, tackling inequality and strengthening government systems and institutions. Climate change is a defining challenge facing policymakers today. Pillar four consequently commits the UK and Kenya to demonstrate global leadership on climate and environmental issues, by

deploying expertise on climate finance, resilience and adaptation, renewable energy, biodiversity, and science and technology; creating green jobs; and facilitating peer learning.

The UK and Kenya's people-to-people links are rich and plentiful. Under pillar five, we will not only harness, but expand these – across all sectors – to the betterment of our two countries and partners around the world. At both an individual and institutional level, the UK and Kenya will build productive alliances in skills and education; science and research; innovation and entrepreneurship; defence and security; and arts, culture and sports.

Resting on these mutually reinforcing pillars, the UK-Kenya Strategic Partnership will provide a comprehensive framework for achieving – together – a set of shared and often interlinked objectives, with global resonance.

[New Director of Corporate Services takes up role](#)

A new Director of Corporate Services takes up their role at the Civil Nuclear Constabulary, with Patsy Northern joining our Executive Team.

Patsy joins us from the Ministry of Justice and has spent the last 20 years of her career working in senior roles in government, including at HM Prison Service; Department of Health and Social Care; and HM Court and Tribunals Service. Her background is extensive in the areas of commercial, commissioning and leading complex and novel projects and programmes and organisational change.

The post of Director of Corporate Services will oversee Finance and Business Efficiency, Procurement, Estates and Facilities, IT and all commercial activity for the CNC, as well as leading on the development and implementation of the Business Strategy.

Patsy Northern said: "I am really excited to join the CNC and look forward to working with an organisation that has so much to be proud of and so much potential. I am pleased to have the opportunity to play a part in an organisation with such a vital role in protecting national infrastructure and counter terrorism."

Chief Constable Simon Chesterman said: "It is my pleasure to welcome Patsy to her new role and am confident that she will prove to be a valuable member of my Executive Team. She has a wealth of experience to bring to the CNC and I am confident she will make a real contribution to the organisation."

Directors and company sentenced for flouting tyre storage laws

Andrew Eyre, 50, of Poppy Field Road, Wootton, Northampton, was 1 of 2 people and a company sentenced on Friday (17 January 2020).

This was following enforcement action taken by the Environment Agency relating to the illegal storage of tyres in Northamptonshire.

Eyre and John Mullen, 59, of Frankston Avenue, Milton Keynes, were joint directors of company IN4 Ltd until February 2017, when Eyre retired, leaving Mullen as the sole director.

During a sentencing hearing at Northampton Crown Court, His Honour Judge Rupert Mayo heard the pair's actions could have seriously polluted the environment and risked people's homes, health and lives.

The company was only allowed to keep 84 tonnes of tyres on their Brackmills Industrial Estate site, under the conditions of its environmental permit.

But Environment Agency inspections in March 2017 found more than 15 times that amount – more than 1,300 tonnes of tyres – being stored without any effort to prevent a potentially life-threatening fire.

By April, the site had been entirely filled with tyres and abandoned.

Meanwhile, Eyre had set up a second company, Synergy Tyres, at the Broad March Industrial Estate in Daventry, where he continued to stockpile tyres.

He operated without a permit for 4 months until Environment Agency officers discovered more than 120 tonnes of tyres there in April 2017.

The court heard that in May 2017, Eyre applied for exemptions to process up to 40 tonnes of tyres a week without an environmental permit, as long as the site adhered to certain conditions and safety measures.

However within a month he had already stockpiled more than twice that limit.

The pair's actions could have seriously polluted the environment and risked people's homes, health and lives.

The tyres, stored in huge piles with no fire breaks, posed a serious fire risk to homes less than 10 metres away, the court was told.

The site was regularly shifting up to 225 tonnes of tyres, according to documents later provided to the Environment Agency – more than 5 times the

limit allowed under the exemptions.

The court heard that over the next 6 months the company was given advice, guidance and support to bring it in line with the law but Eyre continued to ignore it.

The company's exemptions were voided in March 2018, effectively revoking its permission to operate.

In interview, Eyre claimed he didn't understand the permitting rules but the court heard he'd been formally cautioned in connection with 2 other sites in the past.

Mullen admitted he knew about the concerns over how his company was operating, but did nothing to resolve them because he hoped it would "sort itself out".

Sentencing Synergy Tyres (Midland) Ltd and its director Eyre, Judge Mayo said there had been, "a deliberate and flagrant breach in the face of warnings given".

He ordered the company to pay a fine of £11,250 and sentenced Eyre to 12 months' imprisonment, suspended for 12 months on condition that he stays out of trouble and performs 150 hours of unpaid work.

Mullen was made subject to a 6 month community order with a requirement that he complete 15 days of Rehabilitation Activities.

An enquiry into the Proceeds of Crime in the case has been postponed to a later date.

Costs and POCA have been adjourned to 6th July 2020.

After sentencing, Rebecca Staff, Environment Officer at the Environment Agency, said:

"It's very clear that the mismanagement of these sites was no innocent mistake – rather, laws were broken and legitimate businesses undercut simply for the sake of profit.

"These businesses deliberately ignored rules meant to make sure that waste sites are run safely.

"Most worrying of all, people and the environment were put at serious risk.

"Lives could have been lost if a fire had broken out at either site, as 1 was mere metres away from homes and the other was connected to industrial units.

"We hope this case sends a message loud and clear – we won't hesitate to take action against those who put profit above their environmental responsibilities."

Everyone has a responsibility to check that they're using legitimate

companies to deal with their waste. Check whether a waste carrier is genuine on the [Environment Agency public register](#).

A new taskforce dedicated to tackling serious and organised waste crime – such as dumping hazardous materials on private land and falsely labelling waste so it can be exported abroad to unsuspecting countries – was launched earlier this month.

The Joint Unit for Waste Crime (JUWC) will for the first time bring together law enforcement agencies, environmental regulators, HMRC and the National Crime Agency in the war against waste crime.

Anyone who suspects a company is operating illegally should report it to the Environment Agency's 24-hour hotline on 0800 80 70 60, or anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.