Impact Report
2025–2026



Foreword

As both a farmer and Chief Executive of Soil Association, I know that change in food and farming is rarely simple.

Good ideas have to work in real fields, kitchens, classrooms, businesses and communities. They must make sense for farmers trying to stay viable, for caterers working within tight budgets, for families making difficult choices, and for policymakers balancing competing pressures.

That is why this impact report matters. It shows not only what we are calling for, but what we are helping to make possible.

Across Soil Association, our work is rooted in a belief that has guided us for nearly 80 years: that the health of soil, plants, animals, people and planet are connected. That belief can be seen throughout these pages. From farmers testing new approaches to soil health, agroforestry and animal welfare, to schools, hospitals and universities using food to support health, learning and care. It can be seen in communities building stronger local food networks, and in partnerships helping to shift policy, markets and public understanding.

I know there are no silver bullets. The challenges facing food and farming are complex, and sometimes the tensions are real. But I also know that practical, hopeful solutions already exist. Our job is to help those solutions to flourish, to bring people together around shared ambition, and to make sure that change is grounded in evidence, experience and the realities of delivery.

This year, this has meant developing the Good Life Framework as a new way of thinking about animal welfare, it helps more farmers and growers learn from evidence, each other and the land itself. It has meant challenging the dominance of ultra-processed food through the Whole Truth campaign, where more than 20,000 people called for a food system that is honest and protects children's health.

It has also meant working through partnerships, because no organisation can transform the food system alone. We have convened growers and policymakers, supported public consultations, worked with businesses to raise standards, and helped local food partnerships strengthen resilience before crisis hits. This is often patient and persistent work, but it is how systems begin to move.

The examples featured in this report from Bury Council, Glasgow Caledonian University and Berrywood Hospital show what happens when good food is treated not as a luxury, but as part of everyday life.



Picture: Alex Burton

Better procurement, freshly prepared meals, community growing, cooking skills and higher standards all help make healthier, more sustainable food normal and accessible.

Our work on the Scottish Organic Action Plan, our certification work on genetic technology and the impact of Farm to Fork Ambassadors highlight how better food systems are built in practice. Policy, standards, public choice, market development and farmer leadership can all create the conditions in which better food and farming can flourish.

What gives me confidence is the people behind this work. Farmers opening their gates. Caterers changing menus and shifting supply chains. Campaigners refusing to accept that the current system is inevitable. Funders investing in long-term change. Partners bringing their knowledge and commitment.

As we celebrate our 80th anniversary year, we should be proud of the progress in this report but not satisfied. The need for change is still urgent. Too much food is still produced in ways that damage nature, undermine health and make life harder for the people who produce it.

But this report shows that another way is possible and already taking shape. I acknowledge and celebrate the committed support of our donors, partners and ambassadors. We are continuing to connect soil health, nature recovery, animal welfare, public health and fairness, to create a food and farming system that works better for people, for nature and for future generations.



Helen Browning
Chief Executive, Soil Association

Introduction

Soil Association is the UK's leading food and farming charity. Our vision is a future in which everyone can enjoy affordable, ethical food, grown and produced in a way that cares for and restores climate, nature and health

We have 80 years' experience of developing practical solutions across farming, forestry and food, using evidence and experience to inform and drive change.

Food and farming systems are highly complex. Lasting change depends on policy, practice, public demand, commercial confidence and long-term investment moving in the same direction. Soil Association is a group of organisations which allows us to achieve greater impact, resilience and reach.

Each part of the Group has a distinct role. Soil Association Charity provides the mission, public voice and systems-change focus. Soil Association Certification turns values into credible action in the marketplace, working with producers, farmers, foresters and businesses to build trust and transform supply chains. Soil Association Exchange helps farmers and land managers measure and improve sustainability performance. Soil Association Land Trust secures and stewards land for long-term public benefit.

Our strength lies in bringing different capabilities together under one umbrella - charitable influence, practical programmes, standards and certification, market engagement, research, evidence and innovation.

Our impact comes from connecting our strengths. Standards and certification help businesses turn ambition into credible action. Evidence informs campaigns. Campaigns shift public debate and policy. Programmes support farmers, schools, communities and supply chains to make change on the ground. Fundraising and philanthropy help unlock the resources needed to test, scale, deliver and share what works.

Together, this creates a practical pathway from insight to implementation: we identify what needs to change, build the evidence, influence the conditions for change, support people to act, and help markets reward better choices in the long term.

Practical solutions for a better food system through Soil Association Charity.

Our focus is in three key areas outlined in our **Strategy to 2030** and reflected in this report:



Farming & land use

In fields & forests, we must support:

- Agroecology
- Regenerative forestry



Joining forces for positive change

We must work together to change how we eat, farm & care for our natural world.



Good food and living

In kitchens & communities, we must support:

- Healthy & sustainable food
- Conscious living

We are working cross-sector with a diverse range of people and partners to change how we eat, farm and care for our natural world.

Flourishing Farmland



Our animal welfare frameworks, farmer-led innovation, and whole farm planning all vividly bring to life the impact our work has on building flourishing farmland. These are not abstract ideas. They are practical routes to healthier soils, higher animal welfare, stronger farm businesses and landscapes that can better withstand a changing climate.

The **Good Life Framework** reflects a shift in how farm animal welfare is understood, measured and communicated. Good welfare is not only about preventing harm. It is about creating the conditions for animals to thrive.

The project is developing clear, species-specific frameworks that identify what a Good Life can look like for farmed animals in practice.

The framework builds on the principle of positive welfare. That might include access to varied diets, comfortable resting areas, social interaction, environmental enrichment, opportunities to forage, explore and play, and systems that support natural behaviour.

Soil Association's role has been to bring together scientific evidence, practical farming insight and supply chain expertise. By translating the Good Life principles into accessible tools and checklists, the project is helping farmers understand where they are already providing positive welfare, where they could go further, and how improvements can be made in ways that are practical and realistic on farm.

Veterinary insight is central to this work, helping ensure the frameworks are grounded in animal health, welfare science and the realities of farm management.

The approach is also being tested in wider farming contexts. In Wales, updated Good Life Frameworks for beef cattle and sheep were piloted across 73 farms, helping to build a clearer picture of positive welfare provision in real farming systems. The work found strong foundations, including high provision of natural shade, shelter and browsing opportunities, as well as good social management, while also identifying areas for further progress. This work has been funded by Welsh Government's Contracts for Innovation.



> "The Good Life Framework has been well received because it is flexible, practical and focused on progress. It gives the supply chain a clearer way to recognise higher welfare farming, support improvement on farm and build greater confidence for customers."
>
> **Kate Still**
> **Head of Farming, Soil Association**

Pictures: Alex Burton, Riverford Organic Farmers, Agroforestry Show 2025 - Soil Association

73
farms piloting updated **Good Life Frameworks** in Wales



1,000
delegates attended the Agroforestry Show.

30 **field labs** supported with four new field lab learning networks launched

450 people attended **AI4SoilHealth** webinars from 68 countries



Biodiversity at Woodoaks Farm

900
trees planted

1,000 m
hedgerow maintained

78 **bird species recorded**

12 **Red List bird species found**

16x **increase in Common Blue butterflies**

50 m **new hedgerow established**



Where community and nature thrive

Woodoaks Farm in Hertfordshire is showing how farming, nature and community can thrive together. Donated to Soil Association Land Trust in 2020, the 300-acre farm is transitioning to organic farming while restoring biodiversity, producing good food and creating more opportunities for people to connect with the land.

> I can't begin to think about Woodoaks Farm without our volunteers, the progress we have made with the community is remarkable in such a relatively short period of time. To know that a range of wildlife such as White-Letter Hairstreak, Reed Bunting and Little Owls are returning to the farm after all the hard work and planning is incredible.
>
> Now more than ever people need a chance to get hands-on with restoring nature and understanding how we can move to a more sustainable farming landscape, not just at Woodoaks but everywhere! To see their enthusiasm and commitment for even the toughest of jobs continues to motivate me in finding transformative ways to look after our land.
>
> **Steve Dutch, Farm Ranger, Woodoaks Farm.**

Shared learning - Agroforestry

Woodoaks Farm hosted the second **Agroforestry Show** in September 2025, delivered by Soil Association in partnership with the Woodland Trust. More than 1,000 delegates from across farming and forestry sectors braved lightning storms and train strikes to exchange knowledge and skills over two days. With agroforestry support now firmly embedded in UK farming policy, the show was a perfect opportunity to inspire, support and connect our tree farming community.

At the show we also launched the second edition of our popular Agroforestry Handbook. The first free edition helped more than 9,000 people to take their first steps in agroforestry. Based on feedback from farmers, the handbook has been updated and expanded to include a new Farm Woodland chapter and an increased focus on climate resilience.

Drawing on the expertise and guidance of our Agroforestry Show steering group, we are continuing to work with the Woodland Trust to develop a sector-wide working group to continue to promote and support agroforestry in the UK.

Farmer-led innovation

Innovative Farmers has championed farmer-led research since 2012 through on-farm research trials known as field labs. More than 80 organisations have provided research or coordination support to field labs, with many more contributing informally through advice, ideas and shared learning.

As well as supporting over 30 ongoing field labs this year, we have also launched four new field lab learning networks. These networks allow for wider groups to share experiences, questions and research, using a variety of different communication methods, including WhatsApp, regular meetings, both online and in person, and newsletters.

We're really excited by the interest generated, with over 160 people already joining the trees for livestock health group demonstrating great levels of engagement. The networks are clearly meeting an appetite for informal but technical discussion amongst farmers, allowing everyone to be part of the conversation, and share the huge amount of knowledge farmers hold.

This work has been made possible thanks to: The Rothschild Foundation, The Aurora Trust, The Mark Leonard Trust, The Lennox Hannay Charitable Trust and Dentons UK and Middle East LLP, with many making multi-year commitments to our ongoing programme.

> We've seen discussions evolve from last time... We have moved past exploring what agroforestry is and why it's important – now we are onto how to get it done at scale. The advice hub, training hub and demonstration area have been popular, which really shows the appetite that farmers have to lead the charge on getting more trees into our farmed landscape.
>
> **Helen Chesshire, Woodland Trust**

Picture: Soil Association

Reaching a global audience:

73,000
video views

12,000
podcast listens

500,000+
social impressions

450
webinar participants

68
countries represented



Collaboration across Europe through AI4SoilHealth

The **AI4SoilHealth** project is a new kind of collaboration for Soil Association, placing us at the cutting edge of soil science alongside leading experts from across Europe. The project is developing tools to help policymakers and farmers better understand and monitor soil health, so they can act early to prevent degradation. Soil Association has played a key role, supporting farm-based trials and leading communications to share knowledge across Europe.

Through international conferences, webinars and local engagement, the project is connecting scientists, farmers and decision-makers, bringing soil health to life and showcasing the tools that will help secure its future. This collaborative Horizon Europe project was funded by the European Union. UK funding was via UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) under the UK government's Horizon Europe funding guarantee.

> "The Whole Farm Plan audits helped me understand the farm's natural resources, carbon impact, soil health and animal welfare needs before making any changes."
>
> **Rachel Ives, Kilburns Farm, Balmerino, Fife**

Pictures: Alex Burton



Certification first in Madagascar

Soil Association Certification has issued the first Forest Stewardship Council Controlled Forest Management certificate in Madagascar, marking a significant milestone for responsible forestry in the country.

Awarded in June 2025 to Les Scieries du Bétsiléo (LSB), a forestry company based in Madagascar's central highlands. LSB manages the Mandaratsy plantation under an agreement with Madagascar's environmental authorities. Established between the 1950s and 1965 to protect the Mandaratsy river watershed and the Antarambiby dam, the plantation is dominated by pine and eucalyptus species and provides employment to over 100 people from surrounding rural communities. LSB's woodchips are supplied to a local company whose products are exported to major international fashion markets.

As part of the certification process, LSB commissioned the first comprehensive inventory of remnant natural forest habitats within the plantation landscape. The study identified a rich diversity of flora and fauna, including endemic bird species, reptiles and insects, creating an important baseline for future conservation monitoring.

Alongside the ecological assessment, consultations with local communities, traditional healers and customary leaders highlighted the forests' value as biodiversity refuges, sacred sites and important elements of local identity. These forest relics have been formally designated as High Conservation Value areas, demonstrating how responsible forest management can support both conservation and local communities.

Whole Farm Planning, Scotland

Planning for Change was an 18-month knowledge exchange project aiming to highlight the potential benefits of a whole farm planning approach and showcase what it could look like in practice in a range of contexts, aligned with agroecological practices. The starting point was the Scottish Government's Whole Farm Plan Framework – supporting policy outcomes of high-quality food production, climate mitigation and nature restoration.

At Kilburns Farm in Balmerino, Fife, farmer Rachel Ives has shown the potential impact of a whole farm planning approach. With support from Soil Association Scotland, Rachel has moved from intensive arable production to a diverse, organic mixed livestock system designed around the land.

Whole farm planning has supported a shift to herbal leys, rotational grazing, livestock suited to the system and low-input management. A 65-acre diverse herbal ley now sits at the centre of the farm's grazing system, helping improve soil structure, water infiltration, natural nitrogen fixation and habitat for wildlife.



Rachel's story shows the potential behind Scotland's growing organic momentum. With the right advice, policy support and confidence, farmers can plan change in ways that restore nature, strengthen resilience and build viable farm businesses for the future.

Funding for this project was made available through the Scottish Rural Development Programme Knowledge Transfer and Innovation Fund, which is funded by the Scottish Government.

The **Environmental baselines and Farm Action Plans** project brought together Soil Association Exchange and the North Highland Initiative (NHI). Working with 21 farms from the North Highland Products collective, Soil Association Exchange established a comprehensive environmental baseline across biodiversity, water, soil health, carbon, animal welfare and social impact. The participating farms, covering 6,581 hectares, were organised into four regional clusters and included both lamb and beef enterprises.

Soil Association Exchange collected farm-level environmental data and supported farmers through workshops and one-to-one advice, helping them interpret their results and develop practical action plans tailored to their systems.

Learnings from the data informed new action plans co-developed in workshops led by Soil Association Exchange and NHI. The common themes that participants chose were improving manure management, enhancing drainage, increasing wildlife habitats, boosting forage quality and integrating more diverse cover crops.

Pictures: Alex Burton, Marie-Christine Flechard

Citizen Opinion

Shifting the National Food Debate

Our work to shape citizen opinion and inform the debate around food choice, health and fairness driven by a variety of press and advocacy campaigns - from informing and inspiring shoppers about the benefit of organic food, keeping pace with a fast-changing and complex regulatory landscape, protecting public choice, and responding to threats of government funding cuts.

Telling the whole truth about ultra-processed food

Ultra-processed foods (UPFs) are foods that have gone through industrial processes which change the original ingredients, leaving little whole food behind. We want to see UK diets shift away from harmful UPFs towards whole and minimally processed foods. We are calling for the government food strategy to put whole foods at the centre, making them available and affordable to all. We believe everyone should have the right to good food made with care for the environment.



Soil Association's **Whole Truth** campaign, launched in Spring 2025, asked why whole and minimally processed foods are so often harder to access, less visible and less heavily promoted than UPF products designed for convenience, long shelf life and profit. The campaign began with front-page coverage in The Guardian, based on Freedom of Information requests submitted by Soil Association.

Those requests revealed how lobbying from the ultra-processed food industry had influenced government guidance intended to help retailers promote healthier deals. The original ambition had been to encourage shops to make more offers available on minimally processed and nutritious foods, such as vegetables, beans and rice. After industry pressure, that focus was weakened.

More than 20,000 people signed the petition calling on government to resist the influence of the ultra-processed food industry and make minimally processed food accessible to all. They were asking for a food system that tells the truth, protects children and makes nourishing food easier to access. More than 2,000 people also wrote to their MP, turning concern into direct political pressure.

The Whole Truth also brought together voices from across public health and civil society. Soil Association convened leading public health bodies in a letter to the Health Secretary and secured support for practical solutions that put children, families and communities ahead of industry interests.

Making whole and minimally processed foods more available, affordable and visible is vital. This matters for children and families, and for the teachers, caterers and local food leaders working to build healthier food cultures.

The campaign is still working towards the policy change Soil Association wants to see. But it has already created a stronger foundation for future advocacy, including constructive relationships with the government's chief nutritionist and senior officials.

By combining investigation, public action and policy expertise, The Whole Truth helped shift the debate from individual choice to food system change. It has shown that people want a food system that tells the truth, isn't influenced by ultra-processed industry priorities, puts health first and makes good food possible for everyone.

20,000
people signed our ultra-process food petition '**The Whole Truth**' with 2,000 people also writing to their MP

4 billion
total media impressions

Featured in:
The Guardian, BBC and The Times

85,000
social media interactions

Over 2,100 pieces of media coverage (99% positive media sentiment)

Over 3.5 million social media views across Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn

14,000 new followers across key social channels



Building confidence in organic

Our research, through focus groups, showed a clear gap between recognition of the organic label and understanding of what it stands for. In response, we focused **Organic September** on bringing the benefits of organic to life for shoppers, with the campaign's gut health experiment achieving a record PR reach of 96 million.

This year, Soil Association Certification helped businesses navigate significant regulatory change, from updates to organic standards and sustainability claims to precision breeding and animal welfare labelling. We translated emerging requirements into clear standards and guidance, helping the sector respond while protecting the integrity of organic.

We strengthened efforts to protect consumer choice as new genetic technology regulations came into force. Evidence gathered by Soil Association Certification was cited repeatedly in a successful High Court challenge to government decision-making on precision breeding.

Our work also protects public choice. In the government's consultation on genetic technologies, 85% of respondents said they did not want genetically engineered foods. Our role is to represent the organic sector in those debates, work with government, NGOs and trade partners, and help keep genetic engineering outside organic standards and supply chains.

Organic gives people a clear, trusted way to choose food produced without genetic engineering, and to keep making that choice with confidence.



Pictures: Bury Food Partnership

Good Food For All

Our work in Bury, Walsall, Glasgow and Northamptonshire demonstrates just some of what happens when good food is treated not as a luxury, but as part of care, learning, public health, dignity and community life. Whether through Gold Food for Life Served Here certification in schools and hospitals, community growing and cooking, or better standards for school food, this work helps make healthy and sustainable food available to all.

Putting good food at the heart of Bury

Working alongside Soil Association, Bury Council has taken a whole-system approach to food, bringing together public health, school catering, procurement, local suppliers, community partners and national frameworks to create lasting change. The result is a food system that is more connected, more resilient and better able to support children, families and the wider community.

At the centre of this work has been a shared ambition to make good food the expectation, not the exception. Through the **Food for Life Served Here** programme, Bury Catering Service has achieved Gold certification across all 56 local authority schools, with more than 10,000 meals served each day through on-site cooking. Menus now include 25% organic produce, alongside more freshly prepared food, higher-quality ingredients and stronger standards around sourcing.

A key part of the transformation has been the way Bury has reshaped its supply chains. By moving away from restrictive supplier arrangements and introducing a dynamic purchasing framework, the council has been able to prioritise social value, sustainability and climate action alongside cost. This has opened up public procurement to local and regional suppliers.

> "Bury Food Partnership is a positive space to connect, challenge and help shape the way Bury sources good food for all. Working across multiple agendas, the topic of good food for all is not seen as standalone. Our collaborative approach gently nudges the food system to ensure access to healthier and sustainable food becomes the norm, rather than the exception."
>
> **Francesca Vale, Public Health Practitioner at Bury Council**



Good food for health and recovery

Berrywood Hospital, part of Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, has become the first hospital in the UK to achieve Food for Life Served Here Gold certification, showing what is possible when good food is treated as part of care, recovery and sustainability.

Berrywood is a specialist mental health facility, providing inpatient care for more than 120 patients each day, alongside a busy café for staff and visitors. From the outset, the catering team wanted to improve food quality, ethical sourcing and the role of food in patient wellbeing. Food for Life provided the framework, structure and expert support to help turn that ambition into action. In just four months, Berrywood introduced more wholegrains, fruit and vegetables, reduced ultra-processed foods and increased organic spend to 15%. The team also strengthened relationships with local and ethical suppliers, supporting animal welfare, reducing food miles and aligning catering with NHS England's Net Zero ambitions. Patient satisfaction and engagement with food have increased, uptake of healthier choices has improved, and staff have developed new skills in scratch cooking, sustainable sourcing and Food for Life compliance.

This work has also supported environmental progress. Through **Cool Food Pro**, schools across Bury are measuring and managing food-related emissions, reducing waste and improving understanding among staff and pupils. At Parrenthorn High School, the move to 100% organic fruit and vegetables delivered measurable carbon savings, alongside improvements in water quality and biodiversity protection.

At a time when school food, childhood obesity, poverty and the quality of children's diets are under renewed national scrutiny, Bury offers a powerful example of what local food system transformation can look like in practice. It shows that when good food is treated as part of public health, education, climate action, supply chain resilience and local economic development, the benefits can be felt across the whole community.

> "Food is medicine. It's the highlight of the day."
>
> **Feedback from patients**

Illustration by Prassida, a pupil at Skene Square Primary School in Aberdeen City

Food for Life Scotland's work, funded by Scottish Government, at Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU), has ensured sustainable catering is becoming part of everyday campus life.

Working with BaxterStorey (a company offering bespoke food and catering services), the university has used Food for Life Served Here as a practical framework to rethink how food is sourced, cooked and served to students and staff. GCU achieved **Food for Life Served Here** Bronze in 2024, before going on to secure Silver in early 2025, showing how large-scale catering can raise standards while still meeting the demands of a busy university setting.

GCU is now cooking 86% of food from fresh ingredients every day, strengthening pride in the kitchen as well as the quality of food on the plate. They are now working towards Gold, with plans to reduce food waste, increase plant-based and organic produce, and embed biodiversity further. It is a model for how sustainable, healthy and values-led catering can work at scale.

Building on the pilot in Aberdeen City Council, **Give Peas a Chance!** expanded to Moray and The Highland Council in 2025 with support from Sustain's Bridging the Gap programme. Organic dried split peas from Aberdeenshire farmer, Phil Swire, were served in schools across the three areas.



67,246
pupils accessed dishes containing peas.



Supplying over **4,330 kg** during the project.

1,498 **pupils** took part in classroom activities across Moray and the Highlands

13,000
people engaged overall.

Partnerships and System Change

Our role is often to convene, connect and hold the mission steady: bringing growers into Parliament, working with businesses to raise standards, supporting public consultations, strengthening alliances and helping local food partnerships become engines of resilience. We know that no organisation can transform the food system alone. Our impact comes from helping others act with confidence, ambition and integrity.

Leading change through collaboration

We are a founding member of the **UK Fruit & Vegetable Coalition**, an alliance representing organic and agroecological growers across the UK. In November 2025, the coalition hosted a well-attended parliamentary launch, bringing MPs, Peers, civil servants, growers and sector organisations together around a shared goal: to grow more fruit and vegetables in the UK and create the conditions for healthier diets, stronger supply chains and greater food security.

At Dagenham Farm in East London, Farming Minister Dame Angela Eagle saw how market gardens can support local communities' health, wellbeing and nutritional security. This work helped secure a Defra commitment to produce a Horticulture Growth Plan. The coalition is now meeting regularly with Defra to help ensure the plan reflects the needs of organic and agroecological growers, including smaller-scale operations.

Collaboration is also at the heart of our work on **Sustainable Food Places** (SFP), a network of 128 partnerships across the UK putting food at the heart of their community.

40+ MPs engaged in the **UK Fruit & Vegetable Coalition work**



128 food partnerships are supported across the UK. Covering an approximate population of 43 million people - **more than 60% of the UK population**.

Our impact comes from helping others act with confidence, ambition and integrity.

Pictures: Alex Burton, Groundswell 2026 - Alex Burton

Over the past year SFP work has focused on connecting with organisations at the heart of communities to better understand how to create healthier, fairer and more sustainable food systems that are better able to withstand disruption, while ensuring everyone can access good food.

Through alliances such as **The Alliance to Save Our Antibiotics**, we bring together evidence to support stronger policy. In 2025-2026, with funding from the Oak Foundation and the Spear Charitable Trust, the alliance began work on a collaborative project testing manure from intensive farms for antibiotic-resistant bacteria. It also published research on ionophores, presented data to the European Commission, called on the UK government for stronger regulation of farm antibiotics and responded to an EU consultation on the risks of excessive biocide use.

Reviewing standards

At the midway point of a two-year review into organic salmon farming, between January – March 2026 we launched a public consultation on proposed changes to organic farmed salmon standards, opening up the conversation to all of our audiences and stakeholders. The context in which salmon farming operates is changing rapidly. Environmental pressures such as rising sea temperatures and associated disease challenges are increasing, whilst consumer demand for salmon continues to grow, adding further pressure on the system.

The review - focusing on mortality rates, welfare assessments, medicinal treatments, feed sustainability and environmental impact - draws on research and data, and expertise from aquaculture, animal welfare, environmental organisations and academia, to help us determine whether we continue our involvement in setting higher standards and certifying organic farmed salmon under the Soil Association symbol. We have also liaised with Scottish Government over regulatory changes that would support better outcomes for salmon farms.

Investment partnerships

After an impactful six-year partnership, supported through restricted grants for key areas of our policy and advocacy work, we were delighted to see our relationship with the Samworth Foundation develop further with a multi-year unrestricted grant. Unrestricted funding provides flexibility, enabling charities to allocate funding where it is most needed, often supporting the 'hard-to-fund' but critical core functions that underpin charities' work. Multi-year unrestricted or strategic partnership funding from the King Charles III Charitable Fund, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and now the Samworth Foundation, demonstrates the impact of long-term partnerships and increasing recognition of the importance of this type of funding.

We have **revamped our website** this year to create an accessible window to our work at Soil Association, improving the structure, search engine and storytelling pieces to help us engage new audiences and drive support and awareness. Investing in communications structures in this way helps build organisational resilience and is key to the future delivery of our work. We are grateful to the Postcode Innovation Trust for funding this vital element of digital transformation.

Picture: Alex Burton

BOOM

In 2025, Soil Association hosted its Best of Organic Market (BOOM) Awards. This year, sponsored by Ocado Retail, one beneficiary was organic confectionery brand Wild Thingz – winner of the Best of New Organic Food & Drink Products Award and the Ocado Retail Roots Award.

Simon Hinks, Product Director, Ocado Retail, said: "Organic is really important to our business and we are working hard to expand choice for our customers. Partnering with Soil Association is invaluable for Ocado Retail as we work to grow the organic market and support the future of sustainable food production. Organic farming plays a crucial role in farming systems, and as a retailer that over-trades in organic, we recognise the importance of securing a robust and growing pool of organic suppliers."

More than **400 entries across 39 categories** made the 2025 BOOM Awards a showcase for the breadth and innovation of the UK organic sector, spanning food and drink, beauty and wellbeing, fashion and textiles and initiatives making organic more accessible.

"Our Wild Thingz Ocado Retail listing has significantly strengthened our credibility within the wider confectionery market and winning a BOOM Award reinforces our core values, enhancing our reputation across the organic, natural and health sectors.

Brand founder Fliss Newland"

Farm to Fork: Enabling Sustainability

Our work from farm to fork helps turn ambition into practical change across supply chains. The progress in Scotland's organic sector, the work on civil food resilience, the ambassador programme and our certification expertise all point in the same direction: towards food systems that are more transparent, more resilient and more accountable. Certification, standards, procurement, policy and market development are different tools, but together they help create the conditions in which better farming and better food can flourish.

Shifting organic ambition into action

In **Scotland**, the organic sector is showing what can happen when political commitment, market development and farmer support begin to move in the same direction. For years, Soil Association Scotland has worked with farmers, growers, businesses, policymakers and partners to build support for organic from farm to fork. This year that long-term work moved into a new phase.

In November 2025, Soil Association Scotland and Soil Association Certification hosted the inaugural Scottish Organic Gathering at Balcaskie Estate in Fife. More than 150 farmers, growers, food businesses, academics and policy leaders came together to explore how Scotland can grow its organic sector, strengthen supply chains and create new routes to market.

At the Gathering, Cabinet Secretary Mairi Gougeon shared details of the forthcoming **Scottish Organic Action Plan**.

The Scottish Organic Action Plan is built on five core pillars. These pillars focus on developing research and training, raising awareness, enhancing supply chains, facilitating land conversion, and promoting public procurement by investing in research, supply chain development, and public procurement.

Mairi Gougeon said: "We need that coordinated approach to really unlock market opportunities, strengthen supply chains, and really raise awareness of the benefits of organic food and farming. So that is where the Scottish Organic Action Plan comes to the fore. Now, that plan is built on collaboration and I think it's ambitious, but it is also really firmly grounded in practical delivery too."

In collaboration with Scotland Food & Drink, Soil Association Scotland and Soil Association Certification are instrumental partners in the development and delivery of the plan. It reflects years of consistent policy support, including the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme, alongside clear political ambition to grow organic production.

David McKay, Soil Association Scotland Co-Director: "There is strong evidence from Europe that effective and targeted Organic Action Plans can drive growth in the production and consumption of organic food."

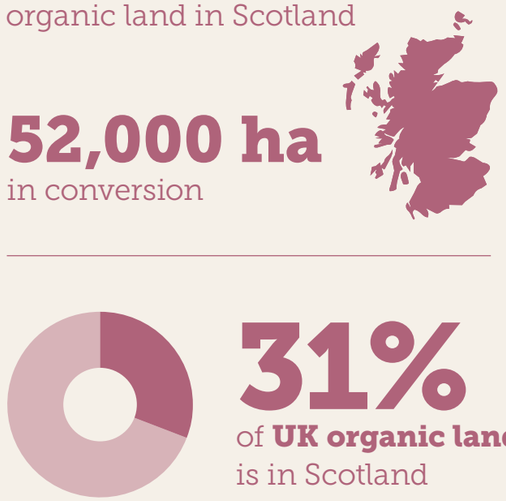
As part of this partnership, Soil Association Certification produced the UK's first Scottish Organic Market Report. The timing matters. The latest Defra organic farming statistics show renewed momentum in organic land use across the UK, with Scotland playing a leading role.

There is now a clear opportunity to bring the same ambition to England and Wales. Soil Association is working tirelessly with partners and ministers to demonstrate how stronger support for organic and agroecological farming could help sustainable British farming thrive.

150+
delegates at **Scottish Organic Gathering**

168,000 ha
organic land in Scotland

52,000 ha
in conversion



31%
of **UK organic land** is in Scotland





Food Resilience

Food resilience is one of the key challenges Soil Association is working to address. Across the **Sustainable Food Places** (SFP) network - comprising 128 cross-sector Food Partnerships spanning all four nations of the UK - we are increasingly asking a simple but profound question: how do we build resilience into local food systems as standard, long before a crisis hits?

Food resilience is about creating healthier, fairer and more sustainable food systems that are better able to withstand disruption while ensuring everyone can access good food. Healthy soils, agroecological farming, shorter and more diverse supply chains, dignified food access, local procurement and strong community networks are not separate agendas; they are all foundations of resilience. This year the SFP network has explored how to strengthen local production and distribution, map community assets and vulnerabilities, rebuild local infrastructure, support equitable access to food and connect with emergency planning structures.

In 2025-2026 Sustainable Food Places was funded by The National Lottery Community Fund and Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

Ambassadors

Our amazing **Farm to Fork Ambassadors** have represented agroecological farming across policy, broadcast, events and awards on behalf of Soil Association. The Ambassador programme is supported through our Farm to Fork partnership with Ocado Retail and is supporting people already doing the work to share their experience, speak to new audiences and influence change in practical ways.

Soil Association Ambassador Sean Ruffell (Managing Director of Organic North) went to Westminster with growers, farmers, supply chain representatives and others to meet more than 40 MPs and launch the UK Fruit & Vegetable Coalition – made up of key organisations representing organic and agroecological growers across the UK. There were eight policy asks including increasing regional collaboration between growers to improve market access and increase UK organic fruit and vegetable production, alongside capital grants, start-up funding and training a new generation of growers.

Pictures: Ocado, Alex Burton



More than 15 Ambassadors have spoken at conferences including Oxford Real Farming Conference, Groundswell and Wild Summit, helping to bring farmer and grower voices into wider conversations about food, farming, nature and climate. A further 10 Ambassadors have featured on radio and podcasts, including BBC Radio 4's Farming Today and the Gardeners' World podcast.

Our Ambassadors demonstrate the impact of investing in people and shifting mindsets as well as projects: equipping farmers and growers to share their knowledge, normalise their experiences, influence debate and help others see what agroecological change looks like in practice.



Global Certification

Soil Association Certification applies its technical expertise globally, supporting partners and supply chains to respond to changing regulation, protect market access and demonstrate credible standards in practice. For Ghana's timber sector, meeting the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) is critical to maintaining access to the European market.

This year, Soil Association Certification delivered a five-day training workshop in Bristol to help Ghanaian timber auditors apply the new regulation in practice.

The programme covered due diligence, geolocation, traceability, risk assessment and Due Diligence Statements, combining expert-led sessions with group exercises and a field visit to the National Arboretum with the UK Forestry Commission.

Participants strengthened their understanding of the EUDR, including how to identify in-scope commodities, assess risk and link findings to appropriate mitigation measures.

Looking Ahead: The Future of Good Food and Farming

We have exciting and ambitious plans ahead during our 80th anniversary year. It is a moment to strengthen public understanding, sharpen our voice and tell clearer stories about the difference our work makes.

In 2026/27, a key focus will be the emerging Organic Action Plan for England. After years of calling for stronger national ambition, this is an important moment for organic food and farming. We will work across the sector to help shape a plan that can support organic growth in practice, not just in principle.

That means making the case for clear targets, fair support for farmers in conversion to organic, stronger supply chains, better routes to market and more organic food in public procurement. It also means continuing to connect organic to the issues that matter across food and farming: climate, nature, soil health, animal welfare, public health and rural resilience.

This work will build on progress across the UK, including delivery of the Scottish Organic Action Plan and continued work with partners in Wales. Together, these plans offer a chance to create a more joined-up framework for organic growth, giving farmers and businesses more confidence to invest, innovate and build long-term demand.

Alongside this, we will continue to scale our wider farming programme and policy work on agroecology, farming with trees and animal welfare. Our research, farmer-led trials, innovation networks and advisory work will help turn evidence into practical change on the ground. From agroforestry and soil health to the Good Life Framework for animal welfare, the focus will be on showing what better food and farming looks like in practice, and what needs to change around it so more people can take part.

The Land Trust is strengthening its ability to protect farmland and nature-friendly food production for future generations. New land and legacy gifts, alongside new Conservation Covenant powers, will help safeguard productive land and farming landscapes for the long term. Enhanced leadership and management capacity are supporting sustainable growth, while investment at Woodoaks is connecting more people with farming through education, community engagement and wellbeing programmes. Together, these developments are laying the foundations for lasting benefits for biodiversity, food production, learning and community resilience.



Pictures: Alex Burton

In 2026-27 more farmers than ever will see the benefit of Soil Association Exchange to aid their transition to sustainable farming. Partnerships with some of the biggest food companies in the UK on supply chain schemes will unlock financial support for farmers. Alongside environmental measurement and advice, new digital tools will help farmers access and evidence requirements for public funding.

Through our food programme and policy work, we will keep working to build more resilient supply chains, transform food environments and support empowered change-makers. That includes practical models for sustainable procurement and sourcing, continued work through Food for Life Served Here, the Gold Kitchen Standard, and the Sustainable Supplier Scheme, and policy influence around school food standards, ultra-processed food and national food policy.

Soil Association Certification will continue to play an important role in helping businesses demonstrate higher standards, build trust with customers and respond to rising expectations around transparency, sustainability and integrity. Certification remains one of the ways we can connect ambition with accountability, giving producers, brands and buyers a clear framework for better practice.

Our direction is clear. We will keep working to scale agroecological and organic systems, drive policy change across the UK, transform food environments and supply chains, strengthen evidence and impact, and make good food and farming more accessible to all.

Charity financial performance report

This is a summary of the charity's financial performance taken from the 2025/26 audited statutory accounts of The Soil Association Limited.



Total income

This year, our total incoming charity resources totalled **£8,407,000**, a decrease of around £1,269,000 on the previous year. This included both restricted funds, for the delivery of specific programmes, and unrestricted funds, which the charity Trustees can determine how best to use. The decrease was largely the result of a one-off corporate donation in the previous year.

Donations
£1,971,000
(2024-25 £2,348,000)
Donations from corporate donors, trusts and foundations and individual supporters.

Legacies
£533,000
(2024-25 £225,000)
Supporters' gifts in wills provide a very valuable source of income for the charity.

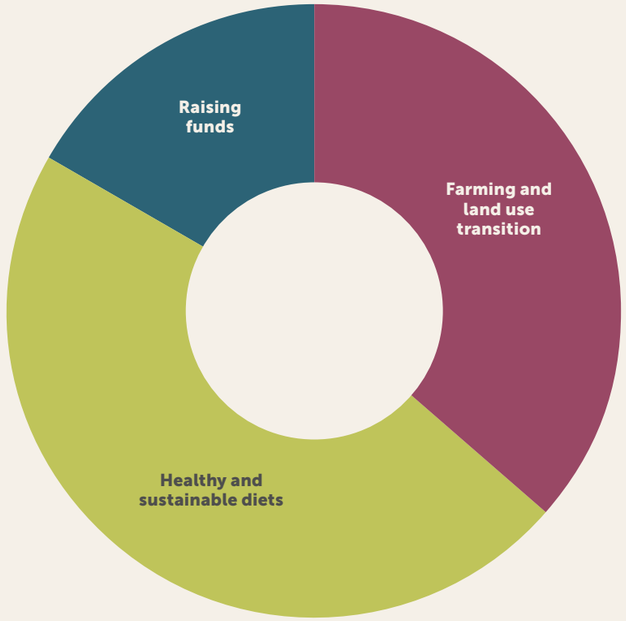
Membership subscriptions
£951,000
(2024-25 £875,000)
Monthly donations from our members.

Contract income
£1,209,000
(2024-25 £1,207,000)
This includes income earned from providing services, principally associated with our Food for Life programmes to local authorities and caterers.

Grants
£2,272,000
(2024-25 £2,493,000)
Restricted grant funding to run key areas of our programmatic work. Grant funding can vary from year to year due to Charity income recognition rules, which often require us to recognise income in full at the point of award.

Other
£165,000
(2024-25 £76,000)
Including royalty income, rental income, bank interest.

Income from trading subsidiaries
£1,306,000
(2024-25 £2,452,000)
Both the licence fees for the charity's subsidiaries to use the charity's name and logo and the profits from SA Certification and SA Sales. Part of the reduction this year was due to Certification retaining £300,000 of profit to support its long-term resilience and continuing work.



Total expenditure

This year, our total expenditure was **£8,605,000** which means that the Charity recorded a small net deficit. Most of the deficit related to restricted projects, where the timing of income recognition and expenditure can fall across financial years.

Group 'free' reserves
The Group 'free' reserves increased from £1,024,000 last year end to **£1,117,000** on 31st March 2026, which is within the targeted range of free reserves set by the Trustees. Our reserves are generated by and held for the benefit of the Soil Association Charity.

Farming and land use transition
£3,141,000
(2024-25 £3,390,000)
Our farming programmes in the year included Innovative Farmers, Agroforestry, Good Life Framework and the Horizon Europe funded "AI4SoilHealth".

Healthy and sustainable diets
£4,051,000
(2024-25 £4,948,000)
Continuation of significant multi year programmes including Sustainable Food Places and Food for Life.

Raising funds
£1,413,000
(2024-25 £1,078,000)
Strategic investment in raising funds, ensuring the Charity has the sustainable long-term income needed to deliver and expand impact.

Our Impact: Making it Possible

Every achievement begins with someone who believes it is possible.

We are extremely grateful to all our members, supporters, funders, partners and other organisations who have supported us throughout the year. Thank you for believing in our mission to fix food and farming – you have helped make the impact highlighted in this report possible.

The urgency of our work is clear. We must build on our decades of experience and success to address the complex, interconnected challenges facing food, farming and the natural world, creating positive change that reaches far beyond any single project or programme. By investing in innovation, collaboration and long-term solutions, our supporters are helping build a more sustainable, resilient and equitable future. Together, we are creating lasting impact and turning bold ambitions into meaningful action and results.

This has been another year of genuine achievement. I am blown away by the stories in this report and by the breadth and depth of the work we do with our partners and for our customers. Whether we are convening, partnering, engaging, demonstrating, advising or persuading, our focus on the impact we can deliver is never far from our minds.

Thank you for your support. The challenges facing food and farming remain great, but so too is the movement rising to meet them and this report shows why there is every reason for hope.

We invite other funders and supporters to join us in the fight for nature – together we can tackle the urgent challenges in food and farming for people and planet.

Phil Fearnley
Chair of Board of Trustees



Pictures: Soil Association

We especially acknowledge the contributions of:

- A Team Foundation
- B and J Lloyd Family Charitable Trust
- Brownswood Charitable Trust
- Cecil Pilkington Charitable Trust
- Contract for Innovation Cymru
- Eagle Charitable Trust
- Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
- King Charles III Charitable Fund
- Lund Trust
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- National Philanthropic Trust
- Northwick Trust
- Oak Foundation
- Postcode Innovation Trust
- Samworth Foundation
- Scottish Alliance for Food
- Scotland Food & Drink
- The Scottish Government
- Scottish Government SRDP Knowledge Transfer & Innovation Fund
- Stewardship
- The Aurum Charitable Trust
- The Aurora Trust
- The Big Give Trust
- The Downforce Trust
- The Earthsong Foundation
- The Golden Bottle Trust
- The Lennox Hannay Charitable Trust
- The MacRobert Trust
- The Mark Leonard Trust
- The Paget Charitable Trust
- The Rothschild Foundation
- The Savitri Waney Charitable Trust
- The Spear Charitable Trust
- The Waterloo Foundation
- Tisbury Telegraph Trust
- Toby & Regina Wyles Charitable Trust
- UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) under the UK government's Horizon Europe funding guarantee

*We extend our thanks to all our supporters who chose to remain anonymous.

Legacy gifts

We are deeply grateful to the generous supporters who have chosen to leave a gift to Soil Association in their will. Legacy gifts are a powerful way to create lasting change, helping future generations benefit from healthier food, sustainable farming and a thriving natural environment. Thank you for remembering Soil Association in your will and making a lasting commitment to a better future.

How you can get involved

There are a number of ways you can support our work and contribute to our mission. You could become a member, make a major gift, make a gift in your will, join us as a Corporate Partner or supporting us through a Trust or Foundation, you can find out more here: **www.soilassociation.org**

Glossary

Agroecology:
Nature -friendly farming and food systems that work with nature to produce food sustainably while supporting people, climate and wildlife.

Agroforestry:
The integration of trees into farming systems to benefit food production, biodiversity, soil health and climate resilience.

AI4SoilHealth:
A European research project developing innovative tools and indicators to improve how soil health is measured, monitored and managed.

Alliance to Save Our Antibiotics (ASOA):
A coalition of organisations campaigning to reduce antibiotic use in farming and tackle antimicrobial resistance.

BOOM Awards (Best of Organic Market Awards):
Soil Association's leading organic awards, celebrating excellence and innovation across the organic sector.

Cool Food Pro:
A free online tool that helps caterers measure and reduce the carbon footprint of the food they serve.

Cover Crops:
Crops grown primarily to protect and improve soil health, reduce erosion and support biodiversity between cash crops.

Defra:
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Environmental Baseline:
A starting assessment of a farm's environmental performance across areas such as soil, biodiversity, water, carbon and animal welfare.

EUDR:
EU Deforestation Regulation

Farm Action Plans:
Practical improvement plans developed using farm data to identify environmental priorities and opportunities for change.

Field Lab Learning Networks (FLLNs):
Farmer-led networks that share knowledge, experience and research around themes explored through Field Labs.

Field Labs:
On-farm trials led by groups of farmers and growers who want to test and adapt their farming methods in real time with support from researchers.

Food for Life (FFL):
Soil Association's programme that makes good food the easy choice through a whole-setting approach across schools, hospitals, universities and communities.

Food for Life Served Here:
An independent certification that recognises caterers serving fresh, healthy, sustainable and responsibly sourced food.

Food Partnerships:
Cross-sector collaborations that bring together local organisations, businesses, public bodies and communities to improve local food systems.

Genetic Engineering (GE):
Techniques used to alter the genetic makeup of plants, animals or microorganisms, including gene editing and genetic modification.

Gold Kitchen Standard:
A Food for Life benchmark recognising kitchens that demonstrate best practice in sourcing, nutrition, sustainability and food preparation.

Good Life Framework:
A practical framework that helps farmers and supply chains assess and improve positive animal welfare outcomes.

Innovative Farmers:
A not-for-profit network supporting farmers and growers to carry out research through farmer-led on-farm trials.

Organic Action Plan (England):
A strategy to support the growth of organic farming, food production and markets in England.

Organic Market Report:
An annual report produced by Soil Association Certification that provides insights into the performance, trends and growth of the UK organic market.

Organic September:
The UK's annual campaign celebrating organic food, farming and products and encouraging more people to choose organic.

Oxford Real Farming Conference (ORFC):
An annual gathering of farmers, growers, researchers and campaigners exploring the future of sustainable food and farming.

Peatland Code:
The UK standard for validating and verifying peatland restoration projects that deliver climate and environmental benefits.

School Food Standards:
The mandatory standards that govern the food and drink served in schools in England.

Scottish Organic Action Plan:
A government-backed plan to grow Scotland's organic sector through support for production, markets, supply chains and public procurement.

Soil Association Exchange:
Soil Association's sustainability platform, providing environmental assessments and data-driven action plans for farmers and land managers.

Sustainable Farming Initiative (SFI):
A farming scheme that rewards farmers for environmental land management and sustainable food production practices.

Sustainable Food Places (SFP):
A programme led by Soil Association, Food Matters and Sustain to support local cross-sector food partnerships working towards better food for all.

Sustainable Nitrogen Alliance (SNA):
A partnership of organisations including Soil Association, working to reduce nitrogen pollution and improve nitrogen use across food and farming systems.

Sustainable Supplier Scheme:
A framework that helps food suppliers demonstrate and improve their environmental and sustainability performance.

UK Fruit & Vegetable Coalition:
A coalition of organisations, including Soil Association, working to increase the production and consumption of fruit and vegetables across the UK.

Whole Farm Planning:
A holistic approach to farm management that considers environmental, economic and social factors together to support long-term resilience.

Whole Truth campaign:
Soil Association's campaign calling for a food system that makes whole and minimally processed foods more accessible, affordable and available.

Wilder Carbon:
A carbon certification programme supporting nature restoration projects that deliver verified climate and biodiversity benefits.

Woodland Carbon Code:
The UK standard for verifying woodland creation projects that remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.



To find out more, visit:

www.soilassociation.org

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If you'd like to get involved in supporting Soil Association, please go to **www.soilassociation.org/support-us**

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Picture: Elliott Neep