



NEWS RELEASE

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APPG chair leads Westminster Hall debate on improving national food security while protecting the environment

Earlier this week, Julian Sturdy MP led a parliamentary debate calling for the government to support 'sustainable intensification' in British farming, to produce more food in the UK without damaging the environment.

Growing global populations mean the world needs to increase food production by 70% by 2050, in a context where the resources available to do this with remain finite, and climate change from human activity is already a major challenge.

As chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Science and Technology in Agriculture, Julian Sturdy has been pressing government on this for many months, and called the debate to force Ministers to explain what they are doing to address this.

In his speech, he argued the government should help British farmers access the latest science and innovations to produce more food from existing farmland, with new technology like carbon capture and gene edited crops allowing for this to be done while minimising environmental impacts.

Julian Sturdy also raised concerns that government policy risked placing too much emphasis on inefficient farm practices aiming at conservation, but really just undermining the UK's ability to feed itself, while ignoring scientific evidence suggesting more food can be produced here sustainably.

Responding for the government, Environment Minister Rebecca Pow accepted Julian Sturdy's call for a meeting to discuss ensuring policy followed the science on sustainable farming, and stressed they agreed more productive UK farming and environmental conservation could proceed hand in hand.

After the debate, Julian Sturdy said: *"I am glad I was successful in reminding the government that sustainably increasing the production of healthy British food must be an urgent priority given global population growth and climate change."*

New technology, and the greater freedom we have to exploit it as a result of Brexit, gives our country an amazing opportunity to take a lead on this, which we must not squander by being slow to adopt new innovations.

Striking a balance between more efficient food production and protecting our environment is vital, and I will continue lobbying government to ensure they get this right."

ENDS

Read the full text of Julian Sturdy's speech [here](#).