



All-Party Parliamentary Group on Science and Technology in Agriculture

Notes of Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 16 May 2023 in Room T, Portcullis House

In attendance:

Julian Sturdy MP
Rt Hon Sir Robert Buckland MP
Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP*
Earl of Lindsay
Lord Trees
Lord Taylor of Holbeach
Earl of Caithness
Lord Carrington

*represented by a member of staff

1. Introduction/election of officers

Following a brief introduction by Julian Sturdy MP, members indicated their support for the continued operation of the Group, approved a draft income & expenditure statement (attached at Appendix 1), and re-elected the existing team of officers as follows:

Chair

Julian Sturdy MP

Vice-chairs

Lord Cameron of Dillington
Earl of Lindsay
Rt Hon Sir Robert Goodwill MP
Baroness Jones of Whitchurch
Lord Trees

2. Review of activities

The following review of activities was also tabled and reported:

2020-22 Biennial Report

The All-Party Group's Biennial Report for 2020-22 was issued in October 2022. Hard copies were available at the AGM and the report can also be viewed on-line at: [appgsta-AnnRep 2020-22 \(appg-agscience.org.uk\)](https://appgsta-AnnRep2020-22.appg-agscience.org.uk)

2022-23 Meetings programme

Over the past year the All-Party Group has hosted meetings at Westminster covering a wide range of issues, including UK innovation and scientific leadership in barley research, Net Zero innovations in the animal feed sector, Parliamentary launch of a new think-tank report on Precision Farming Technologies in the livestock sector, and a cross-industry examination of the policy landscape needed to deliver sustainable intensification in UK commodity crops.

Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Act

Having first led calls for regulatory divergence from EU law on gene editing during the passage of the Agriculture Act in 2020, the All-Party Group actively supported the passage of the Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Act through both Houses of Parliament, regularly updating members and stakeholders and providing briefing papers, expert commentaries and a list of expert contacts for MPs, Peers and their researchers at each stage of the Bill's passage. The Group also co-ordinated a joint statement on gene editing and animal welfare signed by leading organisations and individuals across the scientific, breeding, farming, veterinary and input supply sectors.

Report in preparation: Farming Innovations to Deliver Net Zero

In late 2022, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Science & Technology in Agriculture launched a call for evidence into the farming technologies, innovations and practices which can help deliver on the UK's Net Zero commitments. Members notes that a brief report is in development, drawing on the written evidence submitted to the inquiry from a range of organisations and individuals, as well as presentations made to the All-Party Group by experts from different sectors.

Future meetings programme

Members also discussed a range of topics for future meetings

3. Guest speakers

The AGM was also joined by two guest speakers from US gene editing firm Pairwise.

Haven Baker, Founder & Chief Business Officer, and Dan Jenkins, Head of Regulatory & Quality, described their company's focus on using gene editing technologies to promote healthier eating by improving the flavour and convenience of fresh vegetables and berry fruits. This included the recent approval and launch in the foodservice sector in Canada of mustard greens, gene editing for reduced bitterness and improved flavour. The presentation also included details of consumer research conducted in three US cities. The overwhelming response from consumers to the gene edited mustard green was positive.

The Pairwise slides are available to download on the APPGSTA website.

Appendix 1

DRAFT INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

Name of group: All-Party Parliamentary Group on Science & Technology in Agriculture

Period covered by this statement: 11 February 2022 – 10 February 2023

Income and Expenditure

The group receives no direct income from membership subscriptions, monetary donations, trading income or interest and therefore incurred no direct expenditure over the course of the year.

Value of benefits in kind

Source	Description	Value £s	Received
Front Foot Communications Ltd	<p>Front Foot Communications Ltd provides the secretariat to the APPG: primarily this involves organising meetings, liaising and corresponding on behalf of the group, producing the group's annual report and maintaining the group's web-site.</p> <p>Front Foot Communications Ltd is paid by the following organisations to act as the APPG's secretariat: National Farmers Union, National Institute of Agricultural Botany; UK Flour Millers; Maltsters Association of Great Britain; British Society of Plant Breeders; Agricultural Biotechnology Council; CropLife UK; Agricultural Industries Confederation</p>	22,501 - 24,000	11/03/2022 – 10/03/2023