

Farmland Review 2023



South West England

We know your area, because it's our area too.

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A snapshot of 2023

A national and local overview

National Overview

As we near the end of 2023, it is now clear that the total annual farmland supply will be at its highest since Brexit and the start of the agricultural transition but still below levels seen between 2015-2018. A review of farmland supply trends over the last few decades by our rural research team shows that short-term volatility repeats itself but never in a sustained manner. This is owed to the fact that land ownership is a long-term investment, rolling with financial fluctuations and occasional large portfolio sales spiking farmland supply in specific years.

The long-term trend has been a decrease in farmland supply as more landownership has transitioned from landlords to owner-occupiers. In the 1980s over 400,000 acres marketed a year was not uncommon, whereas it has been 15 years since the market exceeded 200,000 acres. As we move through the agricultural transition and the direct payments received from the basic payment scheme reduce, we are seeing competing demands on land use opening up and becoming a practical reality. From nature-based solutions, through to energy and renewables and development competing demands have the potential to remove land from food production for a period of time.

So what does this mean for values? Overall, we forecast average GB farmland values are likely to be sustained for the next five years with modest increases. This will be reflective and responsive to specific criteria such as location, land type and depth of interest, which all have an impact and influence on land values. However, as we have witnessed recently unforeseen global and economic shocks have the potential to impact all markets.

Local Overview

Demand for all land types across the south west continues particularly for commercial farms and bare land blocks where interest was competitive due to the constrained supply. The off-market and private sale remains highly active. We expect more choice for buyers as supply levels are forecast to increase slightly.

The poorer harvest and concern over weaker commodity prices this year put pressure on smaller holdings and the required scale for agricultural businesses to be successful has undoubtedly risen, particularly for multi-generational farming businesses.

Diversification continues to be incredibly important for buyers and sellers as well as the energy efficiency of secondary and ancillary accommodation.

Both dairy, and livestock farms continue to face significant challenges in terms of scale but also input prices, which despite easing slightly remain considerably higher than 18 months ago. The market for residential farms has become more discretionary, however, those within easy reach of the coast or the moors remain very popular with lifestyle buyers, particularly where there is also access to good schools and thriving market towns.

We are seeing an increasing number of environmentally driven buyers in the market providing competition to the more traditional buyer with sporting aspirations for south west upland farms. Environmentally motivated investors and their requirement for scale means they have been very active in the south west, particularly across Exmoor and Dartmoor.

The key to a successful sale continues to be thorough preparation prior to launch and realistic pricing to encourage competitive interest.



**Year-on-year increase in supply
(end Nov 2022 to end Nov 2023)**



**The number of publicly marketed
acres nationally (2023 to end
November), the highest since 2018**



**The number of farms available
that are below 250 acres**



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A selection of property across South West England



Dartmouth, Devon
About 920 acres | Guide £11.5 million



Shillingford, Devon
About 80 acres | Guide £1.3 million



Trevalga, Cornwall
About 1,200 acres | Guide £15.75 million



Herodsfoot, Cornwall
About 247 acres | Guide £2.3 million



Tiverton, Devon
About 115 acres | Guide £875,000



North Newton, Somerset
About 2 acres | Guide £275,000



Ashley, Hampshire
About 1,060 acres | Guide £14 million



Bath, Somerset
About 200 acres | Guide £5.35 million



Maiden Bradley, Wiltshire
About 108 acres | Guide £3.35 million



Bulkington, Wiltshire
About 227 acres | Guide £5.75 million



Salisbury, Wiltshire
About 256 acres | Guide £7 million



Bruton, Somerset
About 343 acres | Guide £15 million

Key Contacts

If you're thinking of buying or selling, contact a member of our team today.



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