

## **National Farmers Union**

The National Farmers Union is a democratic organisation with no political affiliations. It champions and provides professional representation and services for farmers and growers in Britain.

### **William White - Regional Director of the NFU South East region**

William has been in his current post since 2005. He was trained at Seale Hayne Agricultural College, Devon, and has served the NFU for the past 23 years. William serves on the Immigration Minister's Home Office Illegal Working Stakeholder group. He also chairs the North East Hants Agricultural Association, which runs the Alton Show.

### **Dr. Jonathan Scurlock - Chief Adviser to the NFU on Renewable Energy and Climate Change**

As a senior adviser at the NFU headquarters office in Warwickshire, Jonathan leads a small team on this topical subject area. He has 25 years' experience from the university and government research sectors, including energy and climate change policy, plant physiology, biomass energy and other renewables. Jonathan worked previously on renewable energy with regional and local government in North East England, as well as the US Department of Energy in Tennessee. He was educated at Oxford and London Universities, and is a Visiting Research Fellow at the Open University.

### **Suggested themes and questions**

1. Is there currently any significant renewable energy generation on Kent farms? What is the potential and what factors (particularly those that could be influenced by the public sector) are key to increasing the use of a range of renewable technologies?
2. What will it take to make a reality the NFU's aspiration that every farmer should have the opportunity to diversify by exporting low carbon energy services – what are the barriers to progress?
3. Could you expand on your comment in written evidence regarding planting grants in relation to perennial wood crops and on the potential benefits of the Feed-in Tariff (FIT) and Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI).
4. The Gallagher Review concluded that:

“there is a future for a sustainable biofuels industry but that feedstock production must avoid agricultural land that would otherwise be used for food production.”

Could you tell us about the current status of the energy crop vs food debate with regard to the UK. What are the NFU's aspirations with regard to biofuels and in your view, are home-grown biofuels a viable proposition?

Is it possible to verify that non-UK (and UK) biofuels are sustainably sourced? In your view, to what extent is biofuel production an option for Kent?

5. What is the capacity for the generation of biogas from on farm anaerobic digestion in Kent and does this have the potential for wider than on farm use? In Lille, for example a fleet of buses is run on a mixture of natural gas and biogas recovered from organic waste and sludge – in Stockholm, waste collection vehicles run on biogas - what's stopping something like this from happening here in Kent? Do the environmental credentials of biogas as a road transport fuel stand up to scrutiny?
6. Could the residual products from AD on farms contribute to reduced use of fossil-based fertilisers and if so are there any regulatory aspects affecting this?
7. Are you aware of the proportion of Kent farms which are off-grid? Do you see this as a major barrier to the development of renewable energy by the county's farmers and what are the issues?