

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF YOUNG FARMERS' CLUBS ENGLAND AND WALES

YOUNG FARMERS' CLUBS

The Young Farmers Club Movement of England and Wales has some 20,000 members in 700 Clubs.

Contact can be made via the National Office, Y.F.C. Centre, National Agricultural Centre, Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 2LG. Tel: 024 7685 7200.

The Clubs are grouped into 49 Federations usually based on County boundaries and then further divided into 6 English Areas and Wales before joining together as the National Federation.

HISTORICALLY

The Federation was established to provide agricultural education and training in a variety of production areas. In its early years, the Federation produced booklets on farming topics and later developed the Proficiency Tests Scheme and syllabi for a wide range of farming subjects.

AT CLUB LEVEL

YFC styles itself "the Youth Movement of the Countryside". It is a voluntary youth organisation, the top membership age being 26 years. Only Club Members and their representatives have voting rights and so members decide the content of Club Programmes which are developing away from the traditional business meeting and speaker to more activity based programmes, in leisure time, often carrying out projects of community or countryside work and of course operating a wide range of social activities.

AT NATIONAL LEVEL

The National Federation operates a number of competitions under seven headings:

- ◆ Vocational Training
- ◆ Life Skills
- ◆ Countryside and Environment
- ◆ Marketing and Publicity
- ◆ Sport and Recreation
- ◆ Craftwork

It also has extensive International Programmes, which have established worldwide links. These programmes range from low cost cultural exchanges to expeditions, youth camps, study tours, group visits and holidays.

Some of the visits are subsidised, others are operated at minimum cost. The Federation also offers the opportunity for working exchanges – both incoming and outgoing programmes in the United States and most European Countries through its International Farm Experience Programme. NFYFC operates this working exchange programme under the jurisdiction of the European Community through which it offers access to language training linked to work placements.

The Federation also operates the Harvesting Opportunities Permit Scheme through which 1,250 East European students are able to work on British holdings and, as well as earning money, to learn more of the culture of the United Kingdom.

The Federation has an Agricultural and Rural Affairs Standing Committee, which enables members to debate issues of concern to them with relevant policy makers both in other organisations and at government level. Issues under debate are such matters as rural housing, farm tenancies, and education and job opportunities in rural areas.

Extensive training programmes for members are on offer, both in the skills of operating their organisation and in a whole range of life skills. The Federation is particularly keen to extend its influence and persuade members to play a larger part in their local communities and by encouraging young people to work in their countryside and thus improve their environment. Recognising the changing times, the Federation has established its “Charter” for the next period of time, establishing what it sets out to achieve on behalf of which groups of people and the values to which it subscribes.

THE YFC CHARTER

YFC's seek to meet the needs of rural young people through educational, training and social programmes that encourage community involvement and concern for our environment.

THROUGH PARTICIPATIVE YOUTHWORK WE SHALL:

Enable young people to make their own decisions, both within YFC and beyond, on issues which affect their lives.

Programme for a variety of learning opportunities including vocational and lifeskills. Particularly, but not exclusively, for 16 + age group.

By positive yet sensitive leadership, the Movement will provide a framework within which young people can learn and become more involved as members of society.

YFC methods of work together with the Club atmosphere and programme content is the Club Curriculum.

The YFC Curriculum will:

- ◆ Stay in tune with rural values and encourage those who wish to make a link with rural communities.
- ◆ Provide educational and training opportunities including vocational and life skills.
- ◆ Maintain a strong countryside element with relevant farming links.
- ◆ Encourage members to play a full part in the decision-making processes of their local communities.
- ◆ Broaden members Outlook to International horizons.
- ◆ Provide recreational activities that cater for the whole community.