# The hunt is on for Britain’s Fittest Farmer 2020

**Friday 21 February, 2020**

The adrenaline-fuelled competition which took the UK farming scene by storm is back – and it’s been made harder than ever as the hunt for the fastest, strongest and most mentally tough farmers in the land begins.

The search is now on to find one man and one woman who will be crowned Britain’s Fittest Farmers, with a £1,000 cash prize up for grabs for each winner.

ABOUT THE COMPETITION
Britain’s Fittest Farmer is a competition designed to encourage a vital discussion about the physical and mental health of the nation’s farmers in a fun and friendly atmosphere.

So, if you can you outrun a fleeing flock of sheep or do press-ups in the milking parlour, you could be just the person Farmers Weekly is looking for.

As farming becomes less active and more mechanised and office-based, it’s more important than ever before to make sure Britain’s farmers are getting the exercise that they need to stay fit and healthy.

Farming can also be an isolated job, which is why it is also vital for farmers to focus on their own mental health and wellbeing so that they can keep their business in tip top condition too.

That’s why the nation’s favourite ag mag, Farmers Weekly, launched this exciting competition in partnership with Farm Fitness, a hardcore outdoor gym set up by Essex farmer’s son Tom Kemp.

The competition closes at 11.59pm on 17 April 2020 – see the Britain's Fittest Farmer page for full details, terms and conditions. Entrants must be aged 18 or over and be working in farming or the wider agriculture industry.

HOW TO APPLY
To apply, entrants need to go to fwi.co.uk/BFF and answer a few questions on how they keep themselves physically fit and look after their mental health.

Applicants will also need to upload a video or photo of themselves which shows off their physical fitness. Think squats after silaging, pull-ups post-ploughing or lunges while lambing.
All applicants will be invited to compete in one of three regional qualifiers, to be held in Wiltshire, Leicestershire and the Scottish Borders in March and April. The contestants’ all-round fitness will be put to the test in a variety of physical challenges.

This is set to be an exciting series of events, with family, friends and local people welcome to support contestants.
• Qualifier 1: Marlborough, Wiltshire – 29 March 2020
• Qualifier 2: Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire – 4 April 2020
• Qualifier 3: Jedburgh, Scottish Borders – 18 April 2020
Farmers Weekly’s community editor and judge Oli Hill says: “This competition is all about getting our hardworking farmers to think more proactively about their health, both mental and physical.
“It aims to support farmers’ amazing work to put food on our plates and care for our countryside, by helping them to ensure they are fit to farm.

“We’re looking for farmers who make fantastic ambassadors for health and fitness in agriculture, to help break the taboo of talking about mental health issues such as depression, eating disorders and rural isolation.”

“Everyone faces stress at work, but farmers are notorious for not talking about any issues they may have. This competition recognises their everyday challenges – both physical and mental – and aims to open up a healthy conversation."

“The beauty of Britain’s Fittest Farmer is that you don’t have be an Olympic athlete to enter – we’re looking for people who are health conscious and make every effort to strike a good work-life balance.”

Fellow judge Tom Kemp of Farm Fitness, says: “We’re looking forward to going even bigger in 2020, with a true test of mental toughness, strength, power and endurance, whittling away the contenders until

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the last man and woman are left standing.

“Farm Fitness is honoured to be partnering with Farmers Weekly to once again help in the hunt for Britain’s Fittest Farmer. It’s our ongoing mission to honour our agricultural roots, so this is a great privilege for us.”

NOTES FOR EDITORS

VIDEO AND IMAGES
A promotional video of the competition can be found on YouTube: https://youtu.be/4nA7du-iiKU.
Images from the final can be downloaded here (please credit Colin Miller/RBI)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION
Britain’s Fittest Farmer 2020 is being run by Farmers Weekly – the UK’s most-read specialist agriculture magazine and website – as a fun way of sparking a vital discussion about the physical and mental health of our farmers.

Poor mental health is the top health concerns in UK farming, with research by the charity The Farm Safety Foundation finding that at least one agricultural worker commits suicide every week.

The study also revealed that 81% of farmers under 40 years old believe mental health is the biggest hidden problem they face today. All too often mental health issue and poor physical health go hand in hand.

In 2018 Farmers Weekly launched its Fit2Farm campaign aims to help farmers discover how they can improve their own health, wellbeing and work-life balance. The campaign is all about making sure farmers are in top shape, physically and mentally, to run their farm business.

Findings from the survey being published to coincide with the Fit2Farm launch of a Farmers Weekly campaign in September 2018 found that the average farmer works 65 hours a week – much longer than the UK national average of 37 hours.

It is clear that farmers are among the UK’s hardest workers – but long hours and a lack of holidays threaten to undermine their health and wellbeing. Farmers Weekly’s Fit2Farm campaign seeks to help farmers before they get to the point of a mental health breakdown or suffer physical injury.

For more information contact Farmers Weekly’s community editor Oli Hill. Email oli.hill@proagrica.com or call 07881 803480.

2019 BRITAIN’S FITTEST FARMERS AND FINALISTS
If you would like to speak to any of our 2019 winners or finalists (see below), please contact Farmers Weekly’s community editor Oli Hill. Email oli.hill@proagrica.com or call 07881 803480.

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