

2026 Soil Farmer of the Year competition opens for entries



We are delighted to be sponsoring Soil Farmer of the Year again.

Press Release

The 2026 Soil Farmer of the Year competition is now open for entries, launching on World Soil Day and inviting farmers across the UK to showcase how they are putting soil health at the centre of their farm management.

Run jointly by Innovation for Agriculture and the Farm Carbon Toolkit, and sponsored by Cotswold Seeds and Hutchinsons, the competition celebrates farmers who are leading the way in leveraging soil health to support farm business resilience and profitability. Whether through

reduced tillage, integrating livestock, improving drainage, or enhancing biological activity, the award highlights practical that improve business performance.

Becky Wilson, business development and technical director at Farm Carbon Toolkit, encourages applications from all types of farm businesses.

“Good soil management is not defined by acreage, enterprise mix or farming system. We want to hear from any farmer who is actively considering the long-term health of their soils and adapting their management to improve it,” she says. “The competition recognises those successes and helps to share them with the wider industry.”

Entries can be made via a short online form [Here](#), with the option to upload a video or audio submission instead of a written entry.

The winner will receive two advanced gold soil analyses from Hutchinsons, while the farmers placed first, second and third will each receive a Cotswold Seeds voucher and free entry to Groundswell 2026, where the winners will be announced during a dedicated awards session. All finalists will also have the opportunity to host a Soil Farmer of the Year farm walk, enabling the sharing of knowledge, experience and learnings with other farmers.

“Knowledge sharing is central to the ethos of this competition,” Ms Wilson adds. “The 2025 winners will be running farm walks in spring 2026. These are an excellent way for anyone considering entering to see first-hand how leading farmers are managing their soils and what that means for business resilience.”

Jade Prince, head of soils at Hutchinsons, emphasises the wider significance of the award. “More farmers now recognise that prioritising soil health is one of the most effective ways to buffer their businesses against increasingly volatile weather. Drought, waterlogging, and disrupted field operations are becoming more common and healthy soils are a first line of defence. Improved structure, soil chemical balances and better biology all contribute to resilience.”

“This is why Hutchinsons supports the Soil Farmer of the Year competition. We want to champion those who are putting soils front and centre while maintaining strong, productive businesses. I'd encourage anyone on that journey to enter in 2026.”

Paul Totterdell, group director at Cotswold Seeds, highlights the importance of celebrating farmers taking the lead in soil health management.

"It is a pleasure and privilege to be supporting the Soil Farmer of the Year competition for 2026," he says.

“The competition over the years has been pivotal in rewarding the amazing hard work done by real farmers, our guardians of the soil, who have taken the brave step into regenerative agriculture. These farmers and land managers are paving the way in understanding how to achieve agricultural output while protecting our most important natural resource, the soil - and the biology and synergies within it.”

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