



## Revealed: Who Gets What from the EU's Farm Subsidies

**22 March 2005: For immediate use**

Attention: Newsdesks, European affairs correspondents, rural affairs correspondents, agriculture correspondents, freedom of information correspondents

Following a freedom of information campaign led by the Foreign Policy Centre and the Guardian newspaper, the government has released data on all recipients of payments under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in England. Separate announcements are awaited for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Jack Thurston, Senior Research Associate at the Foreign Policy Centre, welcomed the disclosure:

"For too long people have been misled to believe that farm subsidies are about protecting small and family farms. This data shows conclusively that most of the EU's CAP payments goes to large agribusiness and wealthy landowners.

"We hope this data will enable a transparent and constructive public debate about the objectives of European farming and food policy and the future of CAP subsidies. This is a major breakthrough and it shows that the new freedom of information legislation in the UK really has teeth. Farm subsidies are almost half of the EU's entire budget and it is right that the public knows where its money is spent.

"Now that we know just how many large farms and businesses in Britain benefit, the pressure for a limit on individual payments can only increase."

The sugar refiner Tate and Lyle received the most in CAP subsidies, with its various subsidiaries sharing out over £127 million between them in 2004 (£127,324,713). The larger agribusinesses claim payments from the EU in order to compensate for higher prices of inputs like sugar and milk resulting from the protectionism of the CAP.

### **ANALYSIS:**

1. A great deal of CAP money goes to large farms, with smaller ones left in the cold. Out of more than 100,000 recipients in England, 2,269 received more than £100,000 in 2004 while 304 farms received more than £250,000, and Defra made 53 payments to farmers and farm-related businesses worth in excess of £500,000. By contrast, 17,000 farms received less than £1000.
2. Across the EU, 80% of CAP spending goes to just 20% of farms.
3. Wealthy individual British landowners do very well out of the CAP, in some cases netting more than £500,000 a year in public money.

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call Lucy Ahad on 00 44 (0)7950 550 426**



Confusingly, the list of farm payments provided by the government does not differentiate between traditional commodity-linked subsidies and newer business development grants. For this reason the CAP 'rich list' is dominated by unlikely recipients such as business links, local authorities and other providers of training, business advice and rural development services.

As well as releasing data on farm recipients, Defra also released information on the many food processing and manufacturing companies that receive taxpayers' money, mostly through the arcane workings of the EU's sugar subsidy system and the system of export refunds.

**NOTABLE INDIVIDUAL RECIPIENTS:**

**Sir Richard Sutton - £1,117,139**

Sutton, 66, inherited the 7,000-acre Benham Estate in Berkshire, as well as other property, with his baronetcy when his father died in 1981. The Sunday Times Rich List values his interests at £120 million, placing him at 321<sup>st</sup> place in the list.

**Blankney Estates – £986,594**

A large estate in Sleaford, Lincolnshire and home to the Blankney Hunt.

**Thurlow Estate - £906,406**

This estate in West Suffolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire consists of 17,000 acres of mainly arable land.

**Warter Priory Farms - £807,284**

Large farm in the North Yorkshire.

**Blenheim Estate - £511,435**

Farm in Oxfordshire owned by the Duke of Marlborough

**Longford Farm - £476,587**

Wiltshire farm owned by the maverick Earl of Radnor, ranked 621 in the Sunday Times Rich List with an estimated net worth of £64 million.

**Earl of Plymouth Estate - £459,171**

**Grosvenor Farms - £448,472**

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6,000 acre landholding of the Duke of Westminster, Britain's second richest person according to the Sunday Times List.

**Goodwood Estate - £456,404**

12,000 acre West Sussex estate of the Duke of Richmond, ranked 865<sup>th</sup> in the Sunday Times Rich List with an estimated net worth of £45 million. The estate is also home to Goodwood Race Course.

**Sandringham Estate - £399,440**

The Queen's estate and regular holiday retreat in Norfolk.

**Duchy of Cornwall - £134,938**

Owned by Prince Charles, in addition to his Highgrove Home Farm estate which received a further £90,527.

**Waddesdon Farms - £364,004**

Buckinghamshire Estate of the Rothschild family.

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

1. The Common Agricultural Policy costs European taxpayers around €45 billion a year. It costs European shoppers a further €50 billion a year in the form of higher prices for foods due to import barriers and production quotas.
2. To date, the only other EU member states to publish information on farm subsidy recipients are Denmark and Estonia. In the United States, data of this kind has been available and fully searchable online since 2001 courtesy of the Environmental Working Group, a campaigning NGO (see [www.ewg.org/farm](http://www.ewg.org/farm)) and following a landmark Freedom of Information legal case in 1996.
3. Jack Thurston is a Senior Research Associate and author of 'How to Reform the Common Agricultural Policy' (Foreign Policy Centre, 2002) in which he first recommended public disclosure of farm subsidy data. He was Special Adviser to Rt Hon Nick Brown MP at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food from 1999-2001. He can be contacted on 00 44 (0) 7973-155-278.
4. The Foreign Policy Centre is a leading European think tank launched under the patronage of the British Prime Minister Tony Blair to develop a vision of a fair and rule-based world order. Its work on Trade aims to set out practical steps to help reformers achieve their goals by making the case for European openness and putting forward proposals which are fair as well as politically achievable.

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