

FARMING STRONGER LONGER

STRONGER BODY, STRONGER MIND,
STRONGER FARM



WHO IS FS4L?

We're a community-driven initiative dedicated to improving the health and well-being of farmers in Lancashire and beyond. We understand the unique physical and mental challenges you face. That's why we've partnered with experts in health, fitness, and agriculture to create practical resources, like this booklet, to help you stay strong, healthy, and resilient. Our goal is simple: to empower you to prioritise your well-being, so you can continue doing what you love for longer. We listen to farmers, and create resources based on their feedback. Get involved today!

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FARMER HEALTH IS FARM HEALTH

THE RIPPLE EFFECT OF FARMER WELL-BEING

Think of the farm as a complex ecosystem. Every part is interconnected. When the farmer, the very heart of this system, is not at their best, the ripple effects can be felt across the entire operation.

- **Productivity Declines:** If the farmer is unable to work effectively, critical tasks are delayed or neglected, leading to lower yields, reduced quality, and missed opportunities.
- **Financial Strain Increases:** Medical costs, the need for hired help to cover illness, and lost income due to decreased productivity all put immense financial pressure on the farm.
- **Decision-Making Suffers:** Stress and fatigue impair judgment, potentially leading to poor business decisions, missed market trends, or neglecting vital maintenance.
- **Succession Becomes Challenged:** A farmer's ill-health can make succession planning difficult, potentially jeopardising the future of the family farm.



Prioritising your health isn't a luxury; it's the most vital investment in a sustainable, prosperous farm. Nurture yourself to nurture your farm.

1 - ACTIVE AGRICULTURE LIFTING LIKE A PRO (EVEN WHEN YOUR "LIFT" IS A SHEEP)

This season, we're focusing on lifting techniques for the unique challenges of farm work – think natural objects, no handles, uneven surfaces, and sometimes, even objects that have a mind of their own! Remember, there's no one-size-fits-all solution, but there are fundamental principles that will help you lift smarter, not harder.

The Foundation: Set Up is Key

Before you even think about lifting, get yourself in the right position. This is the most crucial step. Your goal is to become as close to the object as possible, almost as if it's an extension of your own body. Think about minimising the distance between you and the load.



The Lift: Legs are Your Levers

Forget about lifting with your back! Your legs are the powerhouses here. Get low, using your knees and hips to squat down. Imagine your legs forming a shelf that you can use to get a secure "wrap" around the object. This close contact allows you to better control the weight and leverage your powerful leg muscles.



1 - ACTIVE AGRICULTURE LIFTING LIKE A PRO

From Ground to Go: Standing and Maneuvering

Once you have a good grip and the weight is resting on your legs, you can begin to stand, keeping the object close to your body. From this position, you have much more control to maneuver the object where you need it.



The X Factor: When Things Get Tricky

Let's be honest, farm life isn't always predictable. Sometimes your "object" might be a calf that's decided it prefers to be elsewhere, or a sack of feed that shifts unexpectedly. This is where proper preparation and recovery become invaluable.



THE WINNING FORMULA: SUPPLE - STRONG - ADAPTABLE

BE HEART SMART:

While proper lifting technique protects your back and joints, it's also important to consider your heart health. Lifting heavy objects increases your heart rate and blood pressure. Listen to your body! Stop and rest if you experience chest pain, shortness of breath, dizziness, or lightheadedness. Know your limits, especially with heavy or awkward loads, and consult your doctor about safe exertion levels, particularly if you have heart conditions.

1 - ACTIVE AGRICULTURE

START YOUR DAY STRONG

Simon, a lifelong sheep farmer, knows a thing or two about keeping things running smoothly. He's always been meticulous about warming up his machinery, ensuring everything is ready for a long day's work. But recently, he's realised something crucial: his own body deserves the same care.

"I've always made sure my tractor's and other machinery are warmed up before I put it to work," Simon shared. "Now I'm thinking, why wouldn't I do the same for myself? Stretching in the morning is like warming up my own engine."



With thanks too: Simon Stott
Laund Farm, Lancashire.
Sheep Milk Company Ltd

It's a simple analogy, but a powerful one. Just as a cold engine can strain and break, so can a stiff body. Simon has noticed a real difference on days he takes a few minutes to stretch, he feels less sore and stiff, even after a demanding day. On days he skips it? He pays the price.

"I used to think stretching was just for athletes," Simon admits. "But it's made a real difference. I'm not as achy, and I feel more ready for the day ahead."

FROM BED TO BARN: DAILY STRETCH

- **Reach High:** Arms overhead, full body stretch.
- **Roll Shoulders:** Loosen tension.
- **Stretch Legs:** Touch toes or use a support.
- **Neck Moves:** Gentle side-to-side and forward-back.

A few minutes can ease stiffness. Warm up like your machinery!

1 - ACTIVE AGRICULTURE

FARM YARD STRENGTH

A great way to keep your body energised day after day and to reduce pain is to include a few stretches at the end of a big day. Stretching or lite movement can be equally beneficial for a big physical day or a day at the wheel.

Couch Stretch: Let's start by focusing on your hips and thighs with this stretch. Position yourself as shown in the picture below, keeping your chest lifted and core engaged. Gently push your hips forward to feel the stretch. For a deeper stretch, elevate your back foot onto a step or a "couch."



Leg Sweep: For this next stretch lie on your back with your arms outstretched. Sweep one leg across your body, aiming to bring it as close to your opposite hand as possible. You have two options here: for a static stretch, hold the position and breathe calmly. Alternatively, for a more dynamic stretch, sweep your leg back and forth, alternating legs. Remember to move slowly and gently, maintaining calm and steady breathing throughout.



1 - ACTIVE AGRICULTURE

FARM YARD STRENGTH

Activate your core-

the box, plank and side plank are great strengthening exercises



All Planks can be done on elbows or hands

Kneel Plank- Lying face down, tuck elbows under shoulders, squeeze your core and glutes, and push up through your shoulders to hold a straight line from head to knees.



Plank- From kneel plank, lift knees to create straight line from head to heels- squeeze that core!



Side Plank- Lying on side, place elbow under shoulder, squeeze abdomen and butt, lift torso, straight line from head to knee, to progress lift the knee, creating straight line from head to foot.

1 - ACTIVE AGRICULTURE

FARM YARD STRENGTH- BULLETPROOF KNEES

Farming's tough on the body, especially the knees. This section has quick, practical exercises to help you stay strong and fit for the long haul.



Lunges- Simple Strength for Farmers: Lunges build strong legs and stability—key for lifting and working on uneven ground. (See our YouTube videos for the multi-position squat!)

Farming Twist:

Strengthen ankles, knees, and hips for uneven farm work by lunging with your front foot pointed slightly in, then out. This improves balance and helps prevent injuries when carrying loads.



Skaters- Power Up Your Legs: sideways jumps shifting weight. Good form prevents injury, builds leg power, balance, and helps absorb force for quick movements and fall prevention

1 - ACTIVE AGRICULTURE

THE FARMER'S BODY: STRENGTH AND SUSTAINABILITY



The physical demands of farming are significant. Repetitive tasks, heavy lifting, and extended hours can place considerable strain on the body. Coupled with limited recovery time, this often leads to persistent aches and pains.

Look at Thomas, a farmer who experienced years of discomfort during shearing. His objectives were to increase his energy levels, improve his fitness, and achieve a pain-free shearing season. He found a solution through a combination of group personal training and MoveMore classes.

By focusing on natural and functional movements, Thomas improved his strength, body awareness, and reduced physical limitations. The structured progression and varied exercises in the MoveMore classes, along with mobility and recovery techniques, further improved his physical capacity.



1 - ACTIVE AGRICULTURE

THE FARMER'S BODY: STRENGTH AND SUSTAINABILITY

As a result, Thomas achieved a shearing season without the usual pain and reported feeling stronger and more capable in his daily farming activities. He continued with these sessions, experiencing ongoing benefits to his overall fitness and well-being on the farm.

While stretching can provide some relief, building fundamental strength in areas like the core and back is crucial for injury prevention and long-term resilience in farming. Like any physically demanding profession, incorporating targeted movement practices is beneficial.



Explore resources to help you farm stronger for longer online and on social media, and learn about classes and the campaign at [**www.bowlandfitness.com**](http://www.bowlandfitness.com)



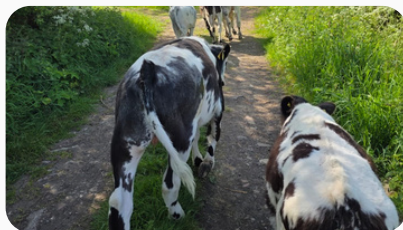
Look out for the Farming Stronger For Longer Leaflet at the Field Nurses stands at this years Shows, and at various Auctions in Lancashire and Yorkshire and beyond.

1 - ACTIVE AGRICULTURE

FARM YARD STRENGTH- ON-THE-GO TONING: CAB BREAKS

Even when you're busy, you can still strengthen key muscle groups. These simple movements can be done almost anywhere, from on the tractor to in the barn, fitting easily into your workday.

Tone Your Butt- Squeeze your buttock muscles together for 10 seconds, then release. Repeat 10 times. This helps strengthen your glutes.



Tighten Your Tummy- Breathe out and pull your stomach in towards your back as far as possible. Hold for 6 seconds and release. Repeat 10 times to tighten your stomach muscles.

Trim Your Thighs- Squeeze your thighs together as hard as you can. Hold for 10 seconds and release. Repeat 10 times. For an increased toning effect, try squeezing some a ball or a folded sweater between your legs or on a quad



Target Your Shoulders- Keeping your arms and shoulders relaxed (you can even lightly hold the steering wheel), lower your shoulders and pull them back as far as you can, bringing your shoulder blades together. Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat 5 times.

Field Nurse +

The Field Nurse Trust supports the mental and physical health of rural communities by providing drop-in sessions at livestock auction marts.

Experienced registered nurses offer basic health screenings, including blood pressure checks and eye tests, and can signpost individuals to other services as needed.



With many nurses coming from agricultural backgrounds and trained in mental health first aid, the Field Nurse Trust understands the unique challenges faced by farming communities and offers a confidential space for a chat, no appointment necessary.



Drop in clinics:

Otley Auction Mart- Mondays

Brock Auction Mart – Tuesdays

Clitheroe Auction Mart – Tuesdays

Skipton Auction Mart- Wednesdays

Bentham Auction – Wednesdays

Penrith Auction Mart- Wednesdays

Gisburn Auction Mart – Thursdays and Saturdays

For more information go to: www.fieldnurse.co.uk

FIGHTING HEART DISEASE ON THE FARM

Heart disease is a serious threat to farmers' health. The long hours, unique stresses of farming life, and a shift towards more sedentary work due to modern machinery put farmers at increased risk.

But there's a powerful tool to fight back: **physical activity**.

Even small changes can make a big difference. Regular exercise is a key weapon against heart disease. It helps lower blood pressure, improves cholesterol levels, reduces stress, and helps your body manage blood sugar.



And the benefits go beyond just your heart! Regular physical activity boosts mental wellbeing, reduces the risk of certain cancers, strengthens bones and muscles, and can even help delay the onset of dementia. So, farm strong and live long!

Make time for movement – it's an investment in your health, your farm, and your future. Even short bursts of activity throughout the day can add up. Find what works for you and get moving!

HEART STRONG, FARM STRONG

Why is Exercise So Important for Heart Health?



Regular physical activity is a powerful tool against heart disease. It helps:

- **Lower blood pressure:** Reduces strain on your heart.
- **Improve cholesterol levels:** Keeps your arteries healthy.
- **Manage weight:** Reduces the burden on your heart.
- **Control blood sugar:** Lowers your risk of diabetes, a major risk factor for heart disease.
- **Reduce stress:** Helps you cope with the pressures of farming.
- **Strengthen your heart:** Makes it more efficient

What Kind of Activity Should I Do?

No need for marathons! A mix of aerobic exercise (like brisk walking, cycling, or active gardening), strength training (weights, resistance bands, or bodyweight exercises), and flexibility/balance activities (yoga, stretching) is ideal for heart health. Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity weekly.

Important Considerations

Before starting any new exercise program, especially if you have a heart condition, talk to your doctor for personalised advice; listen to your body and stop if you experience any warning signs like chest pain, dizziness, or unusual shortness of breath; and always warm up and cool down to prevent injuries



**British Heart
Foundation**

More Information - www.bhf.org.uk

2- STRONGER MIND, STRONGER FARMER

YOUR MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS. PRIORITISE IT.

Farming is physically demanding, but it also takes a toll on your mental wellbeing. A strong mind is just as crucial as a strong back for a successful and fulfilling life on the farm. This section offers some practical tips to help you cultivate mental resilience and prioritise your wellbeing.

The 5-Minute Reset: Breathing Space for a Busy Life

The transition between the farm and your personal life can be blurry.



Create clear boundaries with the "5-Minute Rule." As you head out to the fields, take 2-5 minutes to breathe deeply (4 seconds in, 4 seconds out). This simple act centers you for the work ahead. Do the same when you return home, allowing yourself to decompress before diving into other responsibilities.



This small pause can make a big difference in managing stress and staying present.



"Sometimes i'm so quick to get out I haven't chance to do everything in order, but I manage to find that 5 minute moment to just breath when I come back."

Alison from Wood
End Farm Lancashire



At the core of RABI's mission is the commitment to address the individual needs of farming people.

Practical, financial & emotional support

-  One-to-one, expert information, advice and guidance
-  24/7 freephone helpline
-  Benefits guidance and other financial entitlements support
-  Direct financial grant support to low-income individuals or those in financial crisis
-  Cost-of-living campaigns
-  Professional mental health counselling and self-help click & chat wellbeing support tools/ resources*
-  Accredited mental health training*

Call our free, 24/7 confidential helpline to access our support services:

0800 188 4444

rabi.org.uk



Registered Charity No: 208858
Shaw House, 27 West Way, Oxford,
OX2 0QH

* Available for all qualifying farming people free of charge

2- STRONGER MIND, STRONGER FARMER

YOUR MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS. PRIORITISE IT.

Quick Tips for Stress Management:



Schedule Breaks: Even short breaks throughout the day can help reduce stress and improve focus. Step away from the work, even for a few minutes, to stretch, walk, or simply clear your head.



Connect with Nature: Surround yourself with the beauty of your farm. Take a moment to appreciate the landscape, listen to the birdsong, and breathe in the fresh air. Nature has a calming effect on the mind.



Healthy Habits: Maintain a balanced diet and engage in regular physical activity. These habits not only benefit your physical health but also contribute to improved mood and reduced stress levels.



Learn to Say No: It's okay to say no to extra commitments when you're feeling overwhelmed. Prioritise your own wellbeing and don't be afraid to set boundaries.



Seek Professional Help: If you're struggling with stress, anxiety, or depression, don't hesitate to seek professional help. Talking to a therapist or counselor can provide valuable support and coping strategies. Your mental health is just as important as your physical health.



3- FUEL THE FARMER

EATING FOR ENERGY AND WELLBEING

Farming is tough work. Just like a tractor needs the right fuel, farmers need good food to stay strong. Eating seasonal food provides the best nutrition for energy and health.

Spring into Flavor: Seasonal Favorites

Spring brings a bounty of fresh produce, packed with nutrients to revitalise your body after the winter months. Here are some spring favorites to incorporate into your diet:

Fueling Your Day:

Consistent, balanced meals are key to maintaining energy throughout the day.

- Breakfast jumpstarts your metabolism and provides the energy you need to tackle the morning's tasks.
- A satisfying lunch prevents that mid-afternoon slump.
- Dinner is a time to refuel after a long day.

The Power of Broccoli (and its Superstars!)

Broccoli is a nutritional powerhouse, especially beneficial for active individuals. It's a great source of:

- **Choline:** This essential nutrient plays a crucial role in brain function, memory, and muscle control – all vital for a busy farmer.
- **Sulforaphane:** This compound has been linked to slowing down the aging process and may offer protection against osteoarthritis, helping you stay active and strong for longer.

April-June July-Sept

Pigeon	Asparagus	Pigeon	Apricot
Crayfish	Broccoli	Rabbit	Aubergine
Pollack	Carrot	Bream	Beetroot
Salmon	Jersey Royals	Crayfish	Blackberry
Sea Trout	Kiwi	Mackerel	Blueberry
Crab	Lettuce	Pollack	Broad Bean
Cuttlefish	New Potato	Salmon	Broccoli
Rabbit	Pea	Sea Bass	Cabbage
Squirrel	Purple sprouting	River Trout	Carrot
Cod	Broccoli	Crab	Cherry
Mackerel	Gooseberry	Lobster	Courgette
Sea Bass	Mangetout	Scallops	Cucumber
Cockles	New Potato	Squirrel	Eledrberry
Lobster	Onion	Cod	French Bean
Mussels	Radish	Sea Trout	Gooseberry
Scallops	Rhubarb	Cockles	Lettuce
	Rocket	Oysters	Mangetout
	Samphire		New Pot
	Spinach		Pak Choi
	Spring Greens		Pea
	Spring Onion		Peach
	Strawberries		Plum
	Tomato		Radish
			Raspberry
			Rocket
			redcurrent
			Runner Bean
			Samphire
			Spinach
			Sweetcorn
			Strawberry
			Tomato



3- FUEL THE FARMER

RECIPE OF THE SEASON: ANTI AGING PASTA

Salmon Broccoli Pasta (to serve 4)

- 2 salmon fillets (or cooked meat/fish of choice)
- 350g Broccoli
- 300g Pasta of choice
- 4 tbsp Extra Virgin olive oil
- 4 Garlic cloves, minced
- 1 shallot, finely chopped (optional)
- 1 tsp dried chili flakes (optional)
- 2 tbsp Chopped parsley
- 2 tbsp Parmesan cheese, grated
-



Method:

1. Cook the salmon (or meat/fish) to your personal preference (grilling or baking works well, or use leftover cooked protein).
2. Steam the broccoli for 4-5 minutes, until tender-crisp.
3. Cook the pasta according to package directions.
4. Heat 2 tbsp olive oil in a large frying pan. Add the shallot (if using), garlic, and chili flakes (if using) and sauté for 2-3 minutes, until fragrant.
5. Add the steamed broccoli to the frying pan and toss to combine.
6. Drain the pasta and add it to the frying pan with the remaining 2 tbsp of olive oil and parsley. Toss well to coat.
7. Serve immediately, topped with Parmesan cheese.



Salmon
rich in brain
boosting
nutrients



Extra virgin
olive oil
protecting
your heart



Parsely
helping
manage blood
sugars

4 - CULTIVATING COMMUNITY

THE HEART OF A HEALTHY RURAL LIFE

As part of Farming Stronger for Longer, remember the power of community. Beyond physical work, social connections combat isolation and boost wellbeing. Chat with neighbours, join groups, and offer support. These simple acts build a stronger community and a healthier you. Investing in these relationships reduces stress and fosters belonging, vital for a thriving rural life. Prioritise connection for a healthier, stronger future on the farm.



YOUNG FARMERS' CLUBS: BUILDING CONNECTIONS FOR A STRONGER FUTURE

Young Farmers' Clubs (YFC) are a cornerstone of rural community, offering invaluable support and camaraderie for young people in agriculture. Beyond developing practical farming skills, YFC provides a vital social network, combating isolation often faced in rural life. Members engage in a diverse range of activities, from competitive events and charity fundraising to social gatherings and educational workshops. These interactions foster strong friendships, boost mental well-being, and create a sense of belonging.

Joining your local YFC is an excellent way to connect with like-minded individuals, share experiences, and build a resilient community, contributing to a healthier and more sustainable farming future.

www.nfyfc.org.uk/joining-yfc

4 - CULTIVATING COMMUNITY



PROTECTING YOUR FARM, PROTECTING YOUR PEACE OF MIND

Rural crime can disrupt your livelihood and impact your peace of mind. In this section, Sergeant Kevin Day from the Ribble Valley Rural Task Force outlines the team's commitment to protecting farmers and offers practical advice for safeguarding your farm and equipment.



The Ribble Valley Rural Task Force consists of 1 Sergeant and 5 PC's and we are one of 5 rural teams across Lancashire. Our aim is to tackle rural crime in all its forms and offer reassurance through engagement with our communities. Much of our recent work has centred around quad and farm equipment thefts which have been occurring across the Ribble Valley and Pendle areas.

These prove difficult to predict and detect as the offenders attack randomly across a huge area. Most of our success in reuniting owners with property come from the items with trackers, and we would always endorse these being fitted.



4- CULTIVATING COMMUNITY



PROTECTING YOUR FARM, PROTECTING YOUR PEACE OF MIND

Our most recent significant success has seen 4 Burnley males plead guilty in Crown Court for multiple offences of Conspiracy to steal and burgle. They were targeting rural farms and remote properties and stealing anything that wasn't tied down (and much of what was tied down). They will be sentenced in July 2025.



We also apply for funding and look to support communities with projects such as money toward CCTV in remote areas. This hopefully brings a benefit to the local people and offers a feeling of additional security and the evidence that it can provide us with is invaluable.



"We received funding for Quad alarms and we have plenty of these left if anyone would like one."

The Ribble Valley Rural Task Force can be contacted at:
RVRTF@lancashire.police.uk



Sergeant Kevin Day
Ribble Valley Rural Task Force
Lancashire Constabulary

4- CULTIVATING COMMUNITY



BECOME CYBER HEALTHY THIS SPRING

Farmers are increasingly reliant on technology, making them vulnerable to cyber attacks. In this section, David Suffield from the Cyber Crime Unit within Lancashire Constabulary talks about the risks farmers face and how to protect themselves.

We all keep information about ourselves and our businesses electronically. Agriculture is NO different, as it now makes use of many 'smart', internet connected systems and machinery as well as the usual email and accounting packages. This internet-connected tech has become central to the way we live and do business. As a direct result, they have become an attractive target for criminals. This is why it's so important to secure all the digital aspects of your business.



So, what are the digital aspects of your business?

Firstly, your IT and other computerised equipment. This means everything from the computer where you do your emails and run your farm management software, to the automated machinery, security cameras and smart phones which help you run your farm.



4- CULTIVATING COMMUNITY



BECOME CYBER HEALTHY THIS SPRING

The second aspect to keep in mind involves your online activity. You must consider all the online accounts that you use. This means banking, email and social media but also things like the Rural Payments service, HMRC online services, online shopping and cloud document storage (e.g. Office365, Google Docs, DropBox etc). By following some simple steps in the guide below from NCSC and NFU you will make your cyber world safer and fitter for the years ahead. If I can give you one thing, then please make it this.



Scan me for more information!

The foundation of all cyber security is having a **STRONG PASSWORDS**, so follow these rules:-



- 15 characters or more
- Made up of three random words (if you want to throw an odd character in)
- Use a password keeper
- Have an email account for the business and one for your personal life (shopping / entertainment etc) each with its own **STRONG PASSWORD**



David Suffield

Cyber Crime Unit Protect/Prevent
Lancashire Constabulary

4- CULTIVATING COMMUNITY



HOT TOPICS: RURAL FIRE SAFETY

Fires devastate rural communities, destroying livelihoods and homes. Each year, thousands of farm buildings and acres of land are lost. Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service is committed to helping you safeguard your farm.

ARSON PREVENTION

Prevention is key. Secure outbuildings, restrict fuel access, and maintain perimeter security. Consider security lighting and intruder alarms. Remember, 40% of farms never recover from a serious fire.



Lancashire Fire and Rescue use technology to quickly gather risk information, enabling faster future responses. Sharing details about water supplies and hazards helps to tailor their approach, minimising damage.

Ensure that cylinders are included on your fire risk assessment and inform the Fire Service.



Keep fuel away from heat when not in use



Don't let gas leak



Cylinders should be stored in a cage or similar locked store with appropriate signage.



CYLINDER STORAGE

Proper fuel storage is vital. Keep cylinders locked, away from heat, and leak-free. Include them in your risk assessments. Regular machinery checks and clear access routes are essential.

By working together, we can reduce fire risks. Contact your local fire station for a farm visit and help protect your farm and your future.

For more information visit: www.lancsfirerescue.org.uk

MEET THE FS4L TEAM



**Field
Nurse** 

**Together
an Active
Future**


**BOWLAND
FITNESS** 

www.fieldnurse.co.uk

www.bowlandfitness.com

www.taaf.co.uk/workstreams/ribblevalley

**SPECIAL THANKS TO LAUND FARM AND WOOD END
FARM FOR SUPPORTING THE CREATION OF THIS
BOOKLET AND ALLOWING US TO DOCUMENT THERE
BEAUTIFUL FARMS**

www.thesheepmilkcompany.co.uk

www.woodendalpacas.co.uk

Want to work with us and help us grow? or can we
help you? contact @farming_stronger on

Instagram/ facebook or email

admin@fieldnurse.co.uk for up to date contact info

Follow us:  
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an Active
Future


FARMING 4 STRONGER LONGER

THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS!



Forest of
Bowland
National
Landscape



Harper Adams
University

RABI 

