# Rishi Sunak Unveils Food Security Index at Downing Street Summit



**Rishi Sunak Unveils Food Security Index at Downing Street Summit**

On Tuesday, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak introduced a new food security index during a farm to fork summit held at Downing Street. This initiative aims to measure and boost the UK's self-sufficiency in food production amidst concerns that extreme weather could cause an 8% drop in domestic agricultural output this year.

Surveys by the National Farmers’ Union (NFU) and Riverford Organic Farmers indicate that farmer confidence is at an all-time low. Approximately 82% of farmers reported suffering from severe flood impacts, leading to declining profitability and potential business closures.

The Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit (ECIU) projected that a decrease in crop yields could lower UK self-sufficiency from an average of 86% between 2018 and 2022 to 78% this year. Specifically, wheat self-sufficiency is expected to decline from 92% to 68%, potentially increasing dependency on foreign imports.

In response, Sunak announced measures such as doubling horticulture business funding to £80 million annually and providing £10 million in grants to boost apple and pear production. Additional plans include a review to reduce red tape for glasshouse and polytunnel construction, and £15 million to develop disease-resistant crop varieties.

Environment Secretary Steve Barclay emphasized the importance of food security to national security, while Shadow Environment Secretary Steve Reed criticized the government for its past handling of agricultural issues.

Further discussions at the summit addressed the impacts of recent weather conditions and introduced £75 million in funding to improve field drainage.

The food security index will track domestic production of various foods, highlighting current standings such as only 55% of vegetables and 17% of fruit being grown locally, with initiatives encouraging consumer shifts towards UK-grown produce.

**Key Contacts and Organizations:**
- Prime Minister: Rishi Sunak
- NFU (National Farmers' Union)
- ECIU (Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit)
- Riverford Organic Farmers
- Environment Secretary: Steve Barclay
- Shadow Environment Secretary: Steve Reed
- CLA (Country Land and Business Association) President: Victoria Vyvyan

**Conclusion**
The newly launched food security index and accompanying support measures aim to enhance the UK's agricultural resilience and self-sufficiency amidst challenging conditions.