

UK Precision Breeding – Farming Futures Conference

Outline Programme

Thursday, 24 September 2026

Precision breeding is transforming sustainable agriculture, offering powerful tools to enhance crop resilience, improve productivity, and support climate-smart food systems. As the UK enters a new phase of regulatory and scientific opportunity, collaboration between researchers, industry, policymakers and farmers is critical. This conference brings together leading voices from across the precision breeding landscape to explore how Precision Bred Organisms (PBOs) can deliver real-world impact. The programme will showcase scientific advances, explore routes to market, and address the regulatory and practical steps needed for adoption at scale.

Speakers and participants

Session 1: Science, Policy and Impact

Anne Ferguson-Smith, Executive chair of the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council, Cristóbal Uauy, Director of the John Innes Centre, and a senior Defra representative (TBC.)

Session 2: Farmer Benefit and Farm-Scale Evaluation

Perry Bateman, Head of Science at British Sugar, Andrew Walker, Vice President of Cibus, Simon Griffiths, Group Leader at the John Innes Centre, and Tom Allen-Stevens, Managing Director of the British On-Farm Innovation Network (BOFIN).

Session 3: Bringing PBOs to Market

Peter Eastmond, Biochemist at Rothamsted Research, Diego Durantini, Consultant at John Innes Enterprise, Agnieszka Witek, BioPotatoes, and Andrew Dominy, VP Product Management at Tropic.

Panel: Market Adoption and Regulation

Thomas Vincent, Deputy Director of Innovation at the Food Standards Agency, Margaret Wallace, Joint Head of Crop Characterisation at Niab, Louise Everest, Technical Manager at the British Society of Plant Breeders, and Ed Barker, Head of Policy and External Affairs at the Agricultural Industries Confederation.

Session 4: Clusters, Capability and Confidence - New Frontiers for Precision Breeding

Jonathan Jones FRS, Group Leader at The Sainsbury Laboratory, and Samuel Gattis, Chief Technology Officer at Wild Bioscience.

Panel: What does the UK precision breeding sector need next?

Duncan Ribbons, Chief Legal Officer at Tropic, Ofir Meir, Co-founder and CEO of QuberTech, Felicity Knowles, COO and Co-Founder of Trait Seq, and Cian Duggan, CEO and Co-founder of Resurrect Bio.

Closing Reflections: Next steps and our collective ambition for advancing precision breeding in the UK.

