



[BIFGA NEWSLETTER 165](#)

July 2023

THE 35th BIFGA TECHNICAL DAY TOUR – THURSDAY 11th MAY 2023

The 35th BIFGA Technical Day Tour was held as a “three-farms-tour” in the West Kent area on Thursday 11th May 2023, and our grateful thanks are due to our very kind hosts:

George Chambers, Northiam Farm, Grovehurst Lane, Horsmonden, Kent TN12 8BS

Clive Baxter, Amesbury Farm, East Street, Hunton, Maidstone, Kent ME15 0QY

James Smith, Loddington Farm Ltd, Linton, Maidstone, Kent ME17 4AG

We would also like to thank all of the speakers, as well as the following sponsors, whose generous support helped to make it such a successful event:

Agrovista UK Ltd.: Rutherford House, Nottingham Science and Technology Park, Nottinghamshire NG7 2PZ.

Tel: 0115 939 0202. Contact: Alex Radu Email: enquiries@agrovista.co.uk. Website: www.agrovista.co.uk

J R Breach: Chittenden Orchards, Lovehurst Lane, Staplehurst, Kent TN12 0EX. Tel: 01580 891756.

Email: office@jrbreach.com. Website: www.jrbreach.com

Energy Renewals Ltd: 18 Keep Hill Rd, High Wycombe HP11 1DW. Tel: 07818 401 095.

Website: www.energyrenewals.co.uk

Harvest Agri Ltd: 3 The Glebe, Pembury, Tunbridge Wells TN2 4EN. Tel: 07984 018 400.

Website: www.harvestagri.co.uk

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information@hlhLtd.co.uk

Lambert and Foster: 77 Commercial Road, Paddock Wood, Kent TN12 6DS. Tel: 01892 231604. Contact: Jon

Booth Email: jon.booth@lambertandfoster.co.uk. Tel: 07974 722479. Website: www.lambertandfoster.co.uk

Landseer Ltd. Lodge Farm, Goat Hall Lane, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 8PH. Tel: 01245 357109. Email:

mark@lanfruit.co.uk.

Website: www.lanfruit.co.uk

New Leaf Irrigation: No.1 Bartle Court, Rosemary Lane, Preston, PR4 0HB. Tel: 07870 787728.

Email: ryan@newleafirrigation.co.uk

Rootwave: 8 Brook Business Park, Brookhampton Lane, Kineton, Warwickshire, CV35 0JA. Tel: 0788 078 6460

/ 0192 680 0789. Email: tom.archer@rootwave.com Website: www.rootwave.com

N. P. Seymour; Avon Works, Cranbrook, Kent TN17 2PT. Tel: 01580 712200. Email: claire@npseymour.co.uk.

Website: npseymour.co.uk

The Fruit Grower ACT Publishing UK Ltd: Lion House, 21 Church Street, Maidstone, ME14 1EN. Tel: 01622 291618.

Email: chris.tanton@actpub.co.uk

Weatherbys Hamilton LLP; Hall Farm Stables, Stetchworth, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 0TY. Tel: 01638 563444.

Email: jmcirvine@weatherbyshamilton.co.uk. Website: www.weatherbyshamilton.co.uk

Yara UK Ltd.; Harvest House, Europarc, Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire DN37 9TZ. Tel: 01472 889250.

Email: mark.tucker@yara.com Website: www.yara.co.uk

Please reciprocate and support these companies whenever possible.

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BIFGA SUMMER FARM WALK – TUESDAY 27TH JUNE 2023

The BIFGA Summer Farm Walk was held on Tuesday 27th June 2023 at Downgate Farm, Silverden Lane, Sandhurst, Cranbrook, Kent TN18 5NU by kind permission of Paul Ward, and at Stevens Farm, Tongswood Drive, Rye Road, Hawkhurst, Cranbrook, Kent TN18 5DS, by kind permission of David and Richard Budd.

We started the farm walk at Downgate Farm, with a tour of some of the 30+ hectares of organic apple orchards. We then moved to Stevens Farm for presentations from Carl McNeice, COO Oxbury Bank plc, **One City Place, Queens Road, Chester, CH1 3BQ** (our main sponsors for this event) and Ali Capper, Chairman of British Apples and Pears Ltd. All sectors of the supply chain were represented, including two of the major supermarket chains. The presentations were followed by a tour of the grain stores; a look at specialist arable machinery; and finally, a visit to some adjacent orchards with a talk by Sam Barnes and Richard Budd about mechanical tree planting.

The evening was rounded-off with an excellent hog roast, and we toasted BIFGA's 35th anniversary with a celebratory drink of Gribble Bridge sparkling wine, courtesy of Biddenden Vineyards.

THE 35th BIFGA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – THURSDAY 13TH JULY 2023

The 35th BIFGA AGM was held via Zoom on Thursday 13th July 2023. The current members of the BIFGA General Committee were re-elected: Tom Barnes, John Breach, David Budd, Charnee Butcher, Reuben Collingwood, Colin Corfield, John Dench, Henry Dobell, Nicholas Dunsby, Jon Hatch, Jessica Kedge, Peter Kedge, David Knight, Alastair Large, Judith Perry, Alex Radu, Charles Ramus, Ian Scaman, Richard Stogdon, Nick Swatland, Viv Tanna, Chris Tanton, Mark Tully, Edward Wheeler, Ryan Williams, and Charles Worsfold. BIFGA is very well served with its present committee, however, we would be pleased to co-opt additional members if other members would like to join us.

At the BIFGA General Committee meeting, held via Zoom immediately after the AGM, on Thursday 13th July 2023, office holders were re-elected as follows: Chairman – John Breach; Vice Chairman – Colin Corfield; Deputy Vice Chairman – Chris Tanton, and Treasurer – David Budd.

#SAVE OUR ORCHARDS / BUY BRITISH FRUIT

In February, we produced a flyer "Save Our Orchards" which was circulated widely on social media using the hashtag #saveourorchards. The flyer led to a good deal of TV, radio, and print coverage, highlighting orchard grubbing due to poor returns to growers.

In June, we had some caps and hats produced carrying the logo #SAVE OUR ORCHARDS / BUY BRITISH FRUIT. To date, the caps/hats have been sold at two farm walks, and at Fruit Focus. The hats and caps will also be on sale at the NFU Orchard Competition Presentations on Wednesday 2nd August 2023; the East Kent Fruit Society farm walk on 15th August 2023; and, on the BIFGA stand at the National Fruit Show Wednesday/Thursday 1/2nd November 2023.

INQUIRIES

BIFGA submitted evidence to the House of Lords Committee on the Horticultural Sector in April. This can be found, along with other submissions using the link:

<https://committees.parliament.uk/work/7266/horticultural-sector/publications/written-evidence/>

There are two further inquiries concerning our sector, this time by the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee. These are:

1. UK Trade Policy: Food and Agriculture; and
2. Fairness in the Food Supply Chain, and

BIFGA has now submitted evidence to the Fairness in the Food Supply Chain inquiry.

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GROCERIES CODE ADJUDICATOR (GCA)

Thanks to lobbying by BIFGA and other organisations, we were delighted that the Government has agreed that the GCA should continue in its present format. BIFGA, however, would like the Government to go further, and make the GCA a “full-blown” Regulator “with teeth”.

The annual GCA Conference will take place on 28 September 2023. It will be a hybrid event, with participants able to join online, or in person.

The conference will bring together supplier representatives, designated retailers, and other experts to reflect on changes to the grocery sector over the past decade, ongoing challenges, support available for suppliers, and future priorities. The event is free to attend.

BIFGA PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

The BIFGA General Committee has agreed to resurrect the BIFGA Photography Competition, which was last held some years ago, and staged on the BIFGA Stand at the National Fruit Show. With the increased use of smart phones with cameras, we are hoping that our members will have lots of opportunities to take some super photos. More details will be sent out in due course, but in the meantime, please look out for that “special” snap, and store it safely!

BIFGA QUIZ – SATURDAY 25th NOVEMBER 2023

Please make a note of the date in your diary, and think about getting a team together. The event will be again held at the Staplehurst Village Centre, High Street, Staplehurst, TN12 0BJ. The cost will be £12.50, which will include a fish and chip supper, but please bring your own drinks. As usual, we would be most grateful to receive donations of raffle prizes. Tables can be booked for up to 8 people, but individuals, or couples can join other tables on the night.

NEW MEMBERS

We are very pleased to welcome the following new members:

- 654A Mr Mark Holden, Holden Fruit Consultancy, Bryn Y Borfa, Bont Dolgadfan, Llanbrynmair, Powys
- 655A Mr R Burr, Voxx Machinery, Little Crewden, Grave Lane, Marden, Kent
- 656A Mr Tom Archer, Rootwave, 8 Brook Business Park, Brookhampton Lane, Kington, Warwickshire
- 657A Mr T Underdown, Controlled Atmosphere Services Ltd., Unit 1 Hayle Farm, Marle Place Road, Horsmonden, Kent
- 658A Mr J Clark, Top Fruit Advice Ltd., 20 Roundhay, West Malling, Kent
- 659A Mr H Pilcher, FGS Pilcher Ltd., Stanford Bridge Farm, Pluckley, Kent
- 509A (Utilitas Solutions Ltd.) have a new addition to their business Greenman Solar, Mr S Garnett, Aspect House, 4 Ulley Road, Ashford, Kent

Please remember that we are always keen to find new members (Full, Associate, and Group), and we would appreciate any help that existing members can give in encouraging more to join.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Please note that annual subscriptions are now due, and if you have not already paid, please do so as soon as possible to help keep down administration costs.

With best wishes
John Breach
Chairman

BRITISH INDEPENDENT FRUIT GROWERS' ASSOCIATION

Secretary: Judi Perry Email: secretary@bifga.org.uk Web: www.bifga.org.uk