



GUARDIANS OF THE COUNTRYSIDE

Farmers play an important role in our countryside’s environmental and economic well-being. The EU supports these producers by helping them introduce sustainable farming practices. This collaboration also safeguards Europe’s biodiversity by protecting ecosystems and preventing environmental degradation.

1. Farmers need to take care of the land they work so that it can continue to produce food in the years to come. They take a variety of environmental measures, such as crop rotation and planting and managing hedgerows, to do this. With a partner, research the three measures below and list the reasons why farmers take these steps.



ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURE	REASON
Retain and manage hedgerows	
Protect the margins of fields and nature corridors ('buffer zones')	
Crop rotation	





- 2.** Farming also has a crucial economic role as it supplies the food industry, which is the largest employment sector in the EU providing some 44 million jobs. Many of these jobs exist in rural areas, which means that farmers are supporting rural communities and helping to ensure they thrive.

The EU is helping its farmers to diversify their activities and invest in new ventures, which can often bring benefits to local communities too. These include agri-tourism and direct selling. John and Martha, the farmers in the animated clip, were working in these areas — they had renovated their barn to make guest rooms and were selling their cheese in a farm shop and online.

a) In a small group discuss the following questions.

- ▶ What is agri-tourism?
 - ▶ What are the benefits for farmers?
 - ▶ What are the benefits for the local community?
- ▶ What is direct selling?
 - ▶ What are the benefits for farmers?
 - ▶ What are the benefits for consumers?



Report back to the rest of the class on your discussions. Has anyone visited a farm as an 'agri-tourist' or bought produce directly from a farm?

- b)** Imagine you're a farmer who's just renovated some rooms for guests or opened a farm shop. Create a poster or advert to promote this new venture and encourage people to visit the farm.



AGRI-TOURISM