

# SOCIAL MEDIA IN AGRICULTURE

IFAJ Bootcamp Aberdeen 2014

Aly Balsom - freelance agricultural journalist

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# Felfies

- The Farming Selfie
- Started by Irish Farmers Journal competition - Facebook Selfie on the Farm Competition.
- Nominated for social media award.





# Felfies

- Went viral - featured in The Guardian UK and US, Holland, Italy, Canada
- > 20,000 Felfies on instagram alone (not including Twitter)
- Why success? Timing (popularity of Selfie) + ease of participation + fun!
- Opened debate on rural isolation
- Gave general public glimpse into farming life
- Those on Twitter took ownership of phrase: felfie
- Now regular Felfies competitions online + in print

# #AgriChatUK

[www.agrichatuk.org](http://www.agrichatuk.org)



The Twitter home for UK farming discussions  
Every Thursday 8-10pm



# #AgriChatUk

- **April 2011** - first UK based agricultural hashtag to facilitate discussions amongst farmers on Twitter
- Host weekly discussions Thursday 8-10pm - topics including bovine TB, recent decline in beef price, novel crops, young people in farming
- Aim - give everyone involved in agriculture a place to share ideas, discuss pressing issues, debate hot topics or simply to connect with people in the industry who they may otherwise not have access to.
- Twitter: @Agrichatuk - 13,000 followers
- Global chat - 600 users, Mental health - 130+ users
- [Featured on BBC Radio One](#)

# Twitter

How it's used by UK Farming  
press





**Aly Balsom**  
@AlyBalsom

Freelance agricultural journalist and ex Farmers Weekly deputy livestock editor. Get in touch if you have a story.

Bath, Wiltshire UK  
[alybalsommedia.co.uk](http://alybalsommedia.co.uk)  
Joined May 2010

52 Photos and videos



TWEETS 1,552 PHOTOS/VIDEOS 52 FOLLOWING 316 FOLLOWERS 1,835

Tweets Tweets & replies

**Aly Balsom** @AlyBalsom · Aug 28  
Calving sucklers at 24 months costs by £45 a head' - 26/08/2014 - Farmers Weekly [fwi.co.uk/article/2014/08/26/calving-sucklers-at-24-months-costs-by-45-a-head](http://fwi.co.uk/article/2014/08/26/calving-sucklers-at-24-months-costs-by-45-a-head)

**Aly Balsom** @AlyBalsom · Aug 25  
Pasteurising milk and colostrum to prevent calf scours - 25/08/2014 - Farmers Weekly [fwi.co.uk/article/2014/08/25/pasteurising-milk-and-colostrum-to-prevent-calf-scours](http://fwi.co.uk/article/2014/08/25/pasteurising-milk-and-colostrum-to-prevent-calf-scours)



**Farmers Weekly**

@FarmersWeekly FOLLOWS YOU

Farmers Weekly magazine and website - through the eyes of its content editor Isabel Davies.



TWEETS 16.4K PHOTOS/VIDEOS 408 FOLLOWING 2,203 FOLLOWERS 39.1K FAVORITES 49 More

Tweets Tweets & replies

Pinned Tweet  
**Farmers Weekly** @FarmersWeekly · Aug 29  
Let farmers in England carry on hedge cutting in August says [@nfitweets](#)

**FG**

#BuyBritish



TWEETS 11.8K PHOTOS/VIDEOS 540 FOLLOWING 1,660 FOLLOWERS 23.8K

Tweets Tweets & replies

Retweeted by Farmers Guardian  
**Georgina Haigh** @GeorginaHaighFG · Aug 29  
@NFYFC @AGCOcorp @FarmersGuardian Or he [farmersguardian.com/home/young-far..](http://farmersguardian.com/home/young-far..)

**Farmers Guardian**

@FarmersGuardian FOLLOWS YOU

FG is a weekly national agricultural newspaper. Posts come from FG Editor Emma Penny, News and Business Editor @fgben and Digital Assistant Lauren Connor.



**The Scottish Farmer**

@scottishfarmer FOLLOWS YOU

Informing, entertaining and fighting for Scotland's farming community since 1893.

TWEETS 2,607 PHOTOS/VIDEOS 126 FOLLOWING 1,960 FOLLOWERS 5,642 FAVORITES 31 More

Tweets Tweets & replies

**The Scottish Farmer** @scottishfarmer · Aug 29  
Team TSF ready for the @RSABI #GreatGlenChallenge2014

# Farmers Weekly

- 39,000 followers - growing at about 1,000 a month.
- All organic growth.
- Twitter users tend to be more business focused. Good for breaking news and for getting immediate feedback
- Twitter is probably better as a source of stories and for finding contacts.



# How to get the most from Twitter?

- How should it be used by journalists?
- Conferences? Day to day?



# Twitter tips

- Engage and have an opinion
- Don't say anything you wouldn't shout on a crowded bus!
- Align self with important/influential figures
- Have a go, be relevant, personal and do something people want to see
- Be humorous
- More effective when Tweet with photo

# Ways to use Twitter discussions

- Twitter feeds?
- How use in print?  
Basis of  
story/discussions  
?

**Twitter Feed**

**Tweets** Follow

**Large Herd Seminar** 14 Jul  
@LargeHerds  
Farmers Guardian's report on Karl Burgi's presentation at this year' Large Herd Seminar #totaldairy14 [farmersguardian.com/home/livestock...](http://farmersguardian.com/home/livestock...)  
Expand

**Tom Wall** 9 Jul  
@dairycoach  
@Davidrowe\_1 @LargeHerds @sjdtrimmer @SaraPedersen3 No easy answer for motivating people... be authentic, give feedback, & differentiate!  
Retweeted by Large Herd Seminar  
Expand

**Kat Norfolk** 7 Jul  
@kittykat531

Tweet to @LargeHerds

# #SOS Dairy

4 #SOSDAIRY



## Farmers unite in the battle for fair farmgate prices

Milk price cuts prompted farmers and others involved in the food chain to take to the internet like never before. *Dairy Update* gives a cross-section of the numerous comments

### FROM THE FWI FORUMS

"If you ask the average person how much they pay for their milk, they have no idea. Therefore prices could be increased to the general public. Milk is often sold as a loss leader. Why does it always have to be the farmers who take the price cuts?"  
2709055

"I don't think it is about begging the supermarkets to pay us more, it is about getting our message across to consumers about the true value of our products, and why it is different from the alternatives. You only have to look at the value that clever marketing has put into water to see that we are the ones that have got it wrong."  
bosshogg

"Milk's worth what someone will pay you for it – get used to it. It does not leave the farm as the finished article. If someone thinks they can process and retail it better, bring it on, but given our track record, don't hold your breath."  
Up the rams

Join the debate on our website forums at [www.fwi.co.uk/milkforumdebate](http://www.fwi.co.uk/milkforumdebate)



### FROM FACEBOOK

"Protesting was the right thing to do. Those MPs in London and the fat cats

around the UK continue to not have a clue what farmers go through. Before long there aren't going to be any farmers left and what is the UK going to do then?"  
Sophie Brewer

"As a consumer, I would rather pay a higher price for produce knowing the farmers receive a fair price. For me, it's also about the welfare of the animals – I don't want to see UK farming standards go down. We have some of the highest farming standards in Europe, so let's keep it that way."  
Ruth Edge

"Putting the price up for the public, or having the public pay more, does not resolve the fundamental issue of large supermarkets having the monopoly on dictating prices. Only restricting availability to the supermarkets or refusing to meet their demands on price will resolve the issue."  
Mike Maxwell

"Does anyone think about how we are so easily led by modern shopping practices? I hate supermarkets and their marketing practices. Three cheers to the farmers."  
Camper Vanman

More than 18,000 people follow *Farmers Weekly* on Facebook. Go to [www.facebook.com/farmersweeklyuk](http://www.facebook.com/farmersweeklyuk) and click 'like'



### ON TWITTER

Hundreds have been tweeting using the hashtags #sodairy and #sosmilk – here are a small handful.

"Oil price increases and price at the petrol pump increases. Price to

produce milk increases and price in shops decreases! #confused  
@CatlaneJo

"Well done to everyone involved in the campaign so far, you're making a real difference, keep it up!"  
@J\_Bosworth

"Campaign has achieved a huge amount in just a couple of weeks.

Keep up the momentum and who knows what can be achieved!"  
@LGoringe\_RevPr

"Supermarkets claiming to be ethical must insist on only using milk which has been paid fairly for."  
@goldentamarin80

Follow *Farmers Weekly* on Twitter @farmersweekly

Social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook have played a key role in the #sodairy campaign and have been fundamental in raising consumer awareness.

**facebook**

The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in white lowercase letters on a blue rectangular background with rounded corners.

- Targeted at younger audience
- Friendlier, less technical content
- Eg. 10 Things only a Farmers child would know - 536 likes, 445 shares (Farmers Weekly)
- More serious - SOS Dairy (posters shared 15,000 times, FW)

# How do you use as a journalist?

- What's the best way to promote yourself on Facebook?

Thanks to  
Farmers Weekly @FarmersWeekly  
Jez Fredenburgh (#AgriChat UK)  
Will Wilson @WillWilson100  
The Irish Farmers Journal