

# FARMING IN BRITAIN

Most of Britain has good land and weather for growing food and keeping animals. There are many types of farms, and farming is an important business which is always changing.

About 75% of land in the UK is used for farming but only 59% of the food eaten there is produced on British farms. People like to eat fruit and vegetables that can only grow in warmer countries, and food from abroad is often cheaper at the supermarkets than British food. It is difficult for British farmers to make enough money. Many farms have closed in the last twenty years, and others have a second business, for example holiday homes, horse-riding, off-road driving or shooting.

It is usually the largest farms that have survived. The average British farm is almost three times bigger than the average in Europe, and uses a lot of machines. But there is a growing interest in local, organic food too. Around 4% of British farmland is now farmed organically.



## What grows where?

**Northern Ireland** grows a lot of potatoes. Each person in Britain eats more than 100 kilos of potatoes every year.

The hills of **Wales** are perfect for sheep and Welsh meat is very popular. On flatter land, you can see a lot of leeks growing here.

**Scotland** is known for producing some of the world's best steaks. The main cereal is barley, which is used to make whisky.

Sugar beet and wheat grow well in the **east of England**. About half of the sugar eaten in Britain comes from British sugar beet.

**The Scilly Isles** have shorter winters than most of Britain, so a lot of spring flowers are grown here.

**Kent** is called the 'Garden of England' because it's famous for strawberries and other fruit. Special flowers called 'hops' also grow here. Hops are an important ingredient in beer.

**The West Country** is known for its milk, cream and ice cream.

What do these words mean? You can use a dictionary.  
*barley strawberry sugar beet wheat whisky*

Which areas produce which foods in your country?