



PRESS RELEASE

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Autonomous Agriculture takes centre stage at national industry conference

The future of farming will be under the spotlight at the Institution of Agricultural Engineers (IAgrE) 2026 Landwards Conference. Bookings are now open for the conference, where leading engineers, researchers, technology developers and farmers will examine how agricultural automation is moving from concept to commercial reality.

Hosted by IAgrE President Kit Franklin, the conference will bring together leading engineers, researchers, technology developers and farmers to explore how agricultural automation is moving from experimental concepts to commercially viable solutions that are helping tackle some of farming's biggest challenges, including labour shortages, productivity pressures and sustainability targets.

With autonomous tractors, AI-powered field robots, robotic nursery operations and low-carbon farming technologies all featured on the agenda, the event offers a rare opportunity to hear directly from those driving the next generation of agriculture.

"A decade ago, projects such as Hands Free Hectare captured imaginations by demonstrating what autonomous farming could achieve," said Kit Franklin, President of IAgrE. "Ten years on, the conversation has changed dramatically. Many of these technologies are now being adopted on farms, and the focus has shifted from proving the concept to understanding how we implement them effectively, safely and at scale. This conference will explore both the progress made and the innovations that will shape the next decade."

Speakers include Dan Whitear of Warwick Agritech, who is developing robotic systems to automate nursery operations, James Miller of Earth Rover, who will showcase AI-powered robotic technologies for crop management, Rhian Griffith of Flynt Technology, will explore how automation safety can be integrated into commercial manufacturing,

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Dr Nestor Deniz of Harper Adams University, will present his latest research on implementing dexterous manoeuvres in humanoid robots for apple harvesting, drawing on his expertise in autonomous navigation systems, reinforcement learning and agricultural robotics, and William Mumford of AS Communications, will explore the growing role of driverless tractors in modern farming.

"The focus is no longer on whether these technologies can work, but on how they can deliver practical benefits for farmers, said Kit. This conference brings together the people developing and using these technologies to discuss what is happening now and what comes next."

The conference will conclude with an interactive panel discussion, giving delegates the opportunity to put their questions directly to the experts.

With labour shortages, environmental pressures and the need to improve productivity continuing to challenge the agricultural sector, the event offers a timely opportunity to explore how automation is reshaping the future of food production.

Bookings are now open at: [HTTP://www.iagre.org/landwards-conference-2026](http://www.iagre.org/landwards-conference-2026)

Event Details

IAgrE Landwards Conference 2026

Theme: Automation in Agriculture: From Innovation to Impact

Date: 21 October 2026

Venue: Harper Adams University, Newport, Shropshire

IAgrE:

IAgrE is the professional body for scientists, technologists, engineers, academics, managers and students working in the land-based sector and has an international membership base.

As a licensed body of the Engineering Council (EngC) and a founding Constituent Body of The Society for the Environment (SocEnv), IAgrE registers suitably experienced professionals as Chartered Engineer (CEng), Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv), Incorporated Engineer (IEng), Registered Environmental Practitioner (REnvP) and Engineering Technician (Eng Tech).

For further details or if you would like to interview one of the conference speakers please contact Marion King at communications@iagre.org or call 01234 750876 – mobile 07843382362

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