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As farming embraces digital systems, rural professionals are urged to harness the power of LinkedIn to build their profile, grow networks and unlock new career opportunities across the agricultural sector. **Ash Ellwood** reports.

How optimising LinkedIn accelerates farming careers

Farming is firmly in the digital age, from recording movements on the Cattle Tracing System to tracking post-harvest treatments of combinable crops on a digital grain passport.

And just as farm records have turned digital, personal reputation and visibility within the sector is also driven by an individual's on-line presence.

Agricultural marketer Leah Meirion told young rural professionals, at a recent 1835 Network

workshop at Reaseheath College, that using LinkedIn to its full potential had helped her to triple her salary in just three years – and she believes more people in farming should be taking it seriously.

She said: “Only 1% of LinkedIn users post consistently every week. It is not difficult to stand out if you are prepared to show up.”

The event, which was aimed at 18- to 35-year-old professionals working across the agricultural sector, from farmworkers and consultants to brokers and solicitors, provided answers to what Leah believed to be common issues, such as lacking the confidence to publish a status update or not knowing what to post in the first place.

1835 Network

THE 1835 Network, founded by Nantwich Agricultural Society, aims to bring together the next generation of rural professionals from Cheshire and surrounding areas. For more, visit nantwichshow.org/join-1835

CAREERS WEEK

MARCH 2 marks the start of the National Careers Week campaign, and this year the theme is 'Own Your Future'.

Farmers Guardian will be sharing content across the week, from inspiring stories from new entrants to succession advice.

FG is also part of a nationwide campaign, Soil Ed, that aims to get more farm-related teaching into schools, so look out for updates across the week.



Attendees learned how Leah used LinkedIn to triple her salary in just three years.

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LEAH MEIRION'S TOP TIPS FOR LINKEDIN SUCCESS

1 Understanding the relevance: A popular social networking site, LinkedIn has more than a billion global users utilising the opportunity to network with like-minded – and not so like-minded – individuals across the platform.

According to agricultural marketer Leah Meirion, the agricultural industry was no different – with agritech, food, banking and machinery firms, to name a few, all actively engaging on the site.

She added: “Agriculture is based on relationship-driven services and sales, so building your own brand and reputation is crucial to build on your success.

“Recruiters actively search LinkedIn, so you want to make sure you are putting your best foot forward to stand out to the right people.”

2 Selecting profile pictures:

Selecting appropriate pictures is the opener to your profile which immediately grabs the attention of those looking to recruit, and Leah said selecting the right picture, aimed at the job you were seeking, was imperative to be taken seriously.

“If I would not wear a fluffy headband or a bucket hat to the job that I am doing currently or looking to do in the future, then it should not be in my profile picture,” she said.

“Profile pictures need to be professional, include bright lighting, and be suited to the profession, without selfies or multiple people in them.”

She provided examples (see above) to show some of the



Leah uses this clear, bright and flattering photo to make a good impression on her profile.

common mistakes people make in their profiles.

3 Filling your profile: The headline sitting under the profile picture was the most important single line on a LinkedIn page, according to Leah.

“This wants to be short and snappy. Explain who you are, where you are heading and what your interests are,” she added.

Leah used an example of how she adapted her headline when she was looking to change jobs, not limiting herself to her current role.

“Instead of putting ‘marketing and social media officer’ first, I made sure I introduced myself as a ‘marketing professional in agriculture’, so I was not limiting myself for opportunities from recruiters to just social media, as I am more interested in the strategy,” she said.

The ‘about you’ section enables the individual to expand on their experiences and include more detail where a CV could limit the description.

Leah added: “This section should follow a simple structure: where you started, what you are doing now and

where you want to go. This section should feel active, include short paragraphs and be honest about your experiences, include personality and not feel robotic.”

4 What to post: A barrier to those attending the workshop was knowing what to post and having confidence to do it regularly. Leah suggested content ideas including introductory posts explaining interests and what they were looking for on the platform, mundane daily life posts, and check-ins to events and conferences.

“You build engagement by posting and trying to be consistent. People connect with people, so try and include a person picture in your posts to make it relatable,” said Leah.

“Do not be scared of posts flopping – if it has flopped, that means people have not seen it anyway, so keep trying until you find something that works.”

5 Nourish your community:

When individuals create connections on LinkedIn, the

homepage forms a unique community of chosen people that can see and engage with your content.

Leah also advised the group to spend time reacting and communicating to build a sense of community and support.

“Spend time commenting, liking or reposting content, so when you come to share a post you may receive the same engagement back, which means your posts will travel further,” she said.

6 Test things: Building a reputation and community within LinkedIn was about being willing to test what worked for you, said Leah.

“You must be willing to have a go, post three times in a week and see what gets engagement, comment on posts or post a picture of what you are doing.

“You have to be willing to try it, it might feel cringey to start with but once you get into it, you will be amazed at the opportunities that will start coming your way,” she said.



Spend time commenting, liking or reposting content, so when you come to share a post you may receive the same engagement back

LEAH MEIRION

WHAT TO DO ON LINKEDIN THIS WEEK

■ **Update your profile photo:** Bright, professional shots tailored to the job you want. If you would not wear it to work, it should not be in the picture

■ **Rewrite your headline:** Do not limit yourself to your current role; where are you headed?

■ **Add three proper skills:** Skills could include organisation, sales experience, or marketing

■ **Connect with 10 people:**

Make meaningful connections with those who are like-minded and nourish your community with engagement

■ **Write one short post:** This could be an introduction to yourself and what you are looking for, details on an event or conference you have attended, or what your daily life looks like

About Leah Meirion

LEAH Meirion currently works as the marketing and social media officer at the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society where she leads digital campaigns and initiatives. Leah also won the ‘Young Digital Woman of the Year’ award in 2025 for her work driving digital transformation and creative strategy in agricultural organisations.