



How to buy a farm

Buying a farm or agricultural land is a big thing; it's not just a home, it's a business, a career and an investment. The process and information you need to consider when buying is far more complex.

Demand for agricultural assets is currently very competitive, so you need to be sure about what you want, clear on what you feel is worth paying and potentially ready to move on a sale quickly.

So how do you go about buying a farm and what do you need to consider to make sure you get what you want, for a price that's right for you?

Start by considering:

- Where do you want to live?
- What are you looking for exactly? It may seem obvious, but list all the things you want from your purchase. What is important and what is a nice to have.
- Do you have something to sell before you can buy something else and is this ready to go on the market, if it's not already?
- When are you looking to move and how quick would you like the sale to be? Consider the time of year you are looking as the spring tends to see more properties come to market than other times of year.
- Do you have a solicitor and an accountant appointed?

The next step is to approach agents and make it clear what you are looking for, what position you are in and how quickly you would like to getting moving. It's important to provide as much information as possible so it is clear what you want and time isn't wasted on unsuitable properties.

Before you arrange a viewing, review the particulars carefully.

While at first glance the farm or piece of land may seem perfect, make sure you have read all of the information and have asked questions on anything you are concerned about. This should be done in advance of arranging a viewing so you don't waste yours or the agent's time.

Things to check:

- Be clear on whether the farm/land you are interested in is being sold as a whole or as lots or both and what is included in each of these.
- Most farms are either sold by Private Treaty, (this is where a sale and price are agreed through negotiation with no set timescale) or as lots through auction.
- You should ask about the covenants, (although rare, there might be restrictions placed on the land and how it might be used).
- If there are tenants you will need to find out what agreements are in place and how long they have been in place for.
- Understand what grants and subsidies are included. Are there Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) entitlements? These usually transfer over as part of the sale, but the costs for doing so might be negotiable.
- If there are any specific designations on the land, including Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ), it might mean certain conditions restrictions are in place.
- Check if there are any stewardship schemes in place.
- Check if there is an overage clause condition included as part of the sale. Check the terms and the uplift involved, although the rate can be negotiated.
- Land often comes with public rights of way access or there may be specific access agreements in place for neighbours or utility companies.
- Are there sporting or mineral rights included as part of the sale and what does this mean for you?
- What is the Agricultural Land Classification?

While the property brochure will cover most of the details, the agent will be able to provide further information on any agreements and relevant charges, as well as being able to chat through any other questions you have.



Once you have decided that a farm is worth viewing, you will need to consider how to maximise your visit.

Viewing day:

- Make sure you have a decent plan ready. The plan should be checked once on site to ensure the legal title matches the sales particulars and features.
- It may sound obvious, but pack appropriate footwear and clothing and give yourself enough time to see the local area.
- Once at the viewing, make sure you see as much as possible on foot. Remember what you are looking for and want to see and be guided by that, rather than what the agent wants to show you.
- Make a list and take photos (if this is allowed) of anything you may want to remember during the tour. This will help to jog your memory post viewing as well as providing you with a list of extra questions you might need to ask the agent.
- View all water sources, including lakes and rivers, check out drainage.
- Check that boundaries match what is listed on the particulars and check their condition. Establish whose responsibility it is to maintain them.

While not exhaustive, this list will help you make the most out of the time you have at the property.



It may seem like there is a never-ending list of things to consider, but a good agent will be able to guide you through it all.

We understand how complex and confusing it can all seem, but having been born and bred in the West Country, we have a vast amount of local and national market experience.

Our network of 19 offices across Dorset, Devon and Somerset as well as an office in the heart of London's Mayfair, means we are able to draw on expertise within the firm on a wide variety of complex issues and concerns.

With such a breadth of experience and local knowledge, we will not only be able to find the right property for you, but we will be able to help you achieve the best price and terms possible, supporting you through your purchase from start to finish.

To find out how we can help you, visit gth.net to find your nearest office.