

Press Release

## Wyke Farms Open UK's First Fully Solar Powered Cheese Storage Space in Wincanton

*Growing Wyke Farms saves an additional 31 tonnes of carbon per year*

Bruton, 1<sup>st</sup> October, Somerset, 2020 – Wyke Farms, the UK's largest independent cheese producers and producers of renewable energy have further invested into their '100% Green' sustainability plan, with a new 65kw solar array, positioned on their new cheese storage dispatch building at their Wincanton site.

The new cheese storage is a state-of-the art building where the temperature is controlled at 12 degrees and highly energy efficient. Rich Clothier, Managing Director and third generation family member at Wyke Farms, says: ***“my grandmother's stone maturing barn on the farm stayed at a steady 12c with some small seasonal variations, in our new stores we have replicated that closely in order to keep the recipe as close to hers as possible”***.

There is space for 1762 pallets of cheese, amounting to approximately 2000 tonnes of additional storage capacity that is required to meet the demands of growing export sales in vintage flavour profiles. The new store is 2500 times the size of Ivy Clothier's original cheese store on the farm in Wyke Champflower.

Rich Clothier, Managing Director and third generation family member at Wyke Farms, comments further: ***“this is our fifth business solar array set and moves us closer to fulfilling our commitment to position solar on all of our South facing roofs where we use daytime power. Reducing carbon is essential for all businesses and this is an easy, cost effective way to do just that.”*** He continues: ***the principles of sustainability' are at the heart of all of our business decisions as we can see from the continual development of our green portfolio over the last 10 years” Cheddar is a natural food produced from grass; using the power of nature to age it in a way that has a positive impact on the environment is intuitively the best way to do it.***

Wyke Farms' continual investment and commitment to green energy forms part of the companies '**100% Green**' sustainability plan, through which, they have dramatically reduced their carbon footprint and become the first national cheddar brand to be 100% self-sufficient using their own energy generated from solar and biogas. This latest development is all part of Wyke Farms' journey to become a net positive cheese business.

Wyke Farms' cheese and butter is made with the milk from their cows grazing the lush pastures of the Mendip Hills in the centre of the Cheddar making region in Somerset.

Wyke Farms products are available in selected Lidl stores and in South West UK ASDA, CO-OP and Tesco stores. All products are available online at: [www.wykefarms.com/shop](http://www.wykefarms.com/shop)

For more information, contact: [paloma@connectedpr.com](mailto:paloma@connectedpr.com)

#### **Notes to Editor:**

**Wyke Farms** Ltd is a family run company based in the heart of the Somerset cheddar-making region. The art of traditional cheese making will never be lost on the Somerset farm where the Clothier family have been making cheddar in Somerset since 1861. Today, Wyke Farms is one of the largest independent cheese makers and milk processors in the UK producing over 15,000 tonnes of cheddar per year to the same award winning 160 year-old recipe.

The Wyke Farms brand is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest brand in the Cheddar category and the only independent company in the top 10 cheese brands with retail sales of over £60 million.

Wyke remains a truly traditional family business. Ivy's grandsons Richard and Tom now run the cheese making operations with their father John, whilst her other two Grandsons David and Roger run the family dairy farming operations. The four grandchildren share Ivy's passion for cheese making where flavour, texture and taste are paramount. They believe that this attention to detail is the reason that their cheese has won more awards at national cheese shows than any other.

Wyke Farms are committed to sustainable farming and are proud to be the UK's first national cheddar brand to become 100% self-sufficient in green energy. Wyke Farms sources all of its electricity and gas from both solar and biogas, generated from the farm and dairy waste. The biogas energy is generated from its own anaerobic digester (AD) plant, which saves Wyke Farms over 20 million kilos of carbon dioxide per annum. The company are now Europe's most sustainable business<sup>1</sup>.

They have received national and international recognition for their on-going commitment to sustainability, and have won numerous awards including:

- International Ambassador – Insider's South West International Trade Awards

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<sup>1</sup> As granted by the European Business Awards.

- Green Innovation and Finance Awards 2017 – Winner - Business Leader of the Year
- European Business Awards – Environment & Corporate Sustainability Category – European Champions 2015/2016
- The Renewable Energy Association Winner - Sustainability Category
- Insider “Made in the UK” Awards
- Winner of the Grocer Gold Awards – Green Initiative of the Year 2016
- The Guardian Sustainable Business Awards 2016
- Winner of the Sustainable Futures category at the IGD Awards 2015
- Waitrose Way Awards 2015 – Treading Lightly Reducing CO2 – Winner
- Winner of the Food & Drink Federation ‘Environmental Leadership’ Award 2015
- National Champion representing the UK in the 2015/16 European Business Awards – Environmental & Corporate Sustainability
- UK AD & Biogas Industry Awards – Best On Farm AD Project –Winner
- The Guardian Sustainable Business Awards 2015 (Winner in Carbon & Energy Management)
- The Footprint Awards 2015 – Sustainable Use of Natural Resources (Winner)
- The Footprint Awards 2015 – Energy Efficiency Award (Finalist)
- IFE World Food Innovation Awards 2015 Winner Best Corporate Social Responsibility Category
- National CSR Awards 2015 - Environmental Leadership Award (Winner)
- Farm Business Cream Awards – Cream Award – Highly Commended
- The Guardian Sustainable Business Awards 2014 (Winner in Waste Innovation Category)
- Waitrose Way Awards 2014 - Treading Lightly for Water – Winner
- Waitrose Way Awards 2014 - Treading Lightly for Carbon – Winner
- Short-Term Payback Award (Runner Up)
- Insider Made in the UK – Green/Sustainable Manufacturer Award (Winner)
- 2degrees Sustainable Business Champions 2014 (Energy & Carbon Management)
- The UK & Biogas Industry Awards for Best AD Plant in the Food & Drink Industry (Winner)
- The Grocer Green Supplier of the Year Award 2014
- The Footprint Awards 2014 - The Energy Efficiency Award (Winner)
- The Footprint Awards 2014 - Economic Sustainability Award (Winner)
- The Manufacturer Awards – Manufacturing in Action (Finalist)
- The World Dairy Innovation Awards 2013 – Best Environmental Sustainability Initiative (Finalist)

- The BusinessGreen Leaders Awards 2013 (Highly Commended)

Managing Director Rich Clothier has been recognised for his passion and commitment to sustainability. He won the Food Manufacture Excellence Awards 2013 'Personality of the Year', The UK & Biogas Industry Awards 'AD Hero of the Year' and Farmers' Weekly 'Sustainable Farmer of the Year' 2014 Award.

[www.wykefarms.com](http://www.wykefarms.com)

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