

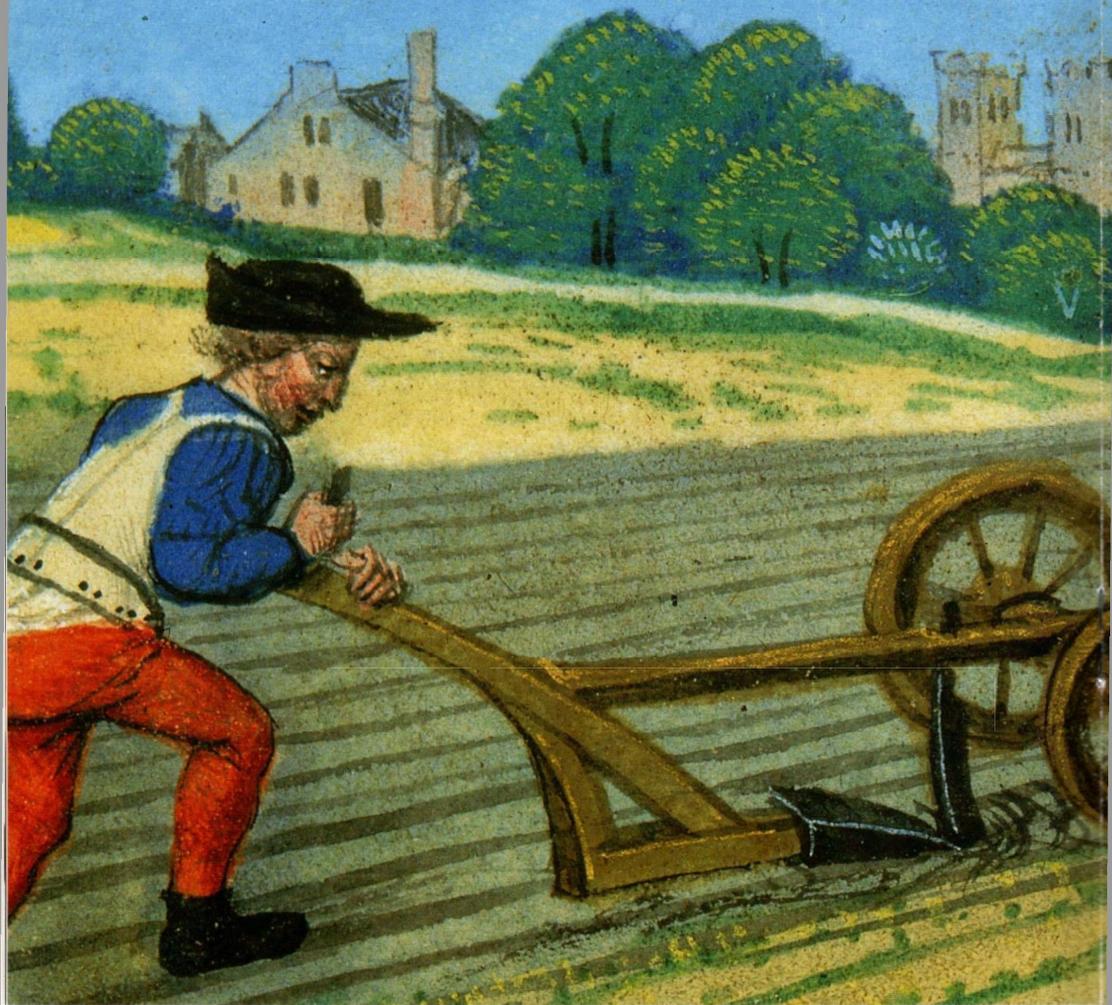
The Farmers' Tale

The ninth of 12 sets of Millennium stamps to be issued in 1999 is on the theme of farming

Farmers' Tale stamps will go on sale at post offices and philatelic outlets on 7 September.

The design of the **19p** stamp, by David Tress, features strip farming. This dates back many centuries and was a prevalent form of farming system in England until the Enclosure Movement of the 18th and 19th centuries.

The **26p** value, by Christopher Wormell, depicts mechanical farming. One of the greatest agricultural innovators was Jethro Tull (1674-1741), author of *The New Horse Hoeing Husbandry* (1731). Until the 17th century seeds were sown by scattering over fields by hand. Tull realised if they were sown in rows fewer seeds were needed and it was easier to extract weeds. In 1701 he invented a machine drill that sowed seeds in rows; its rotary mechanism was the foundation of all subsequent sowing instruments.



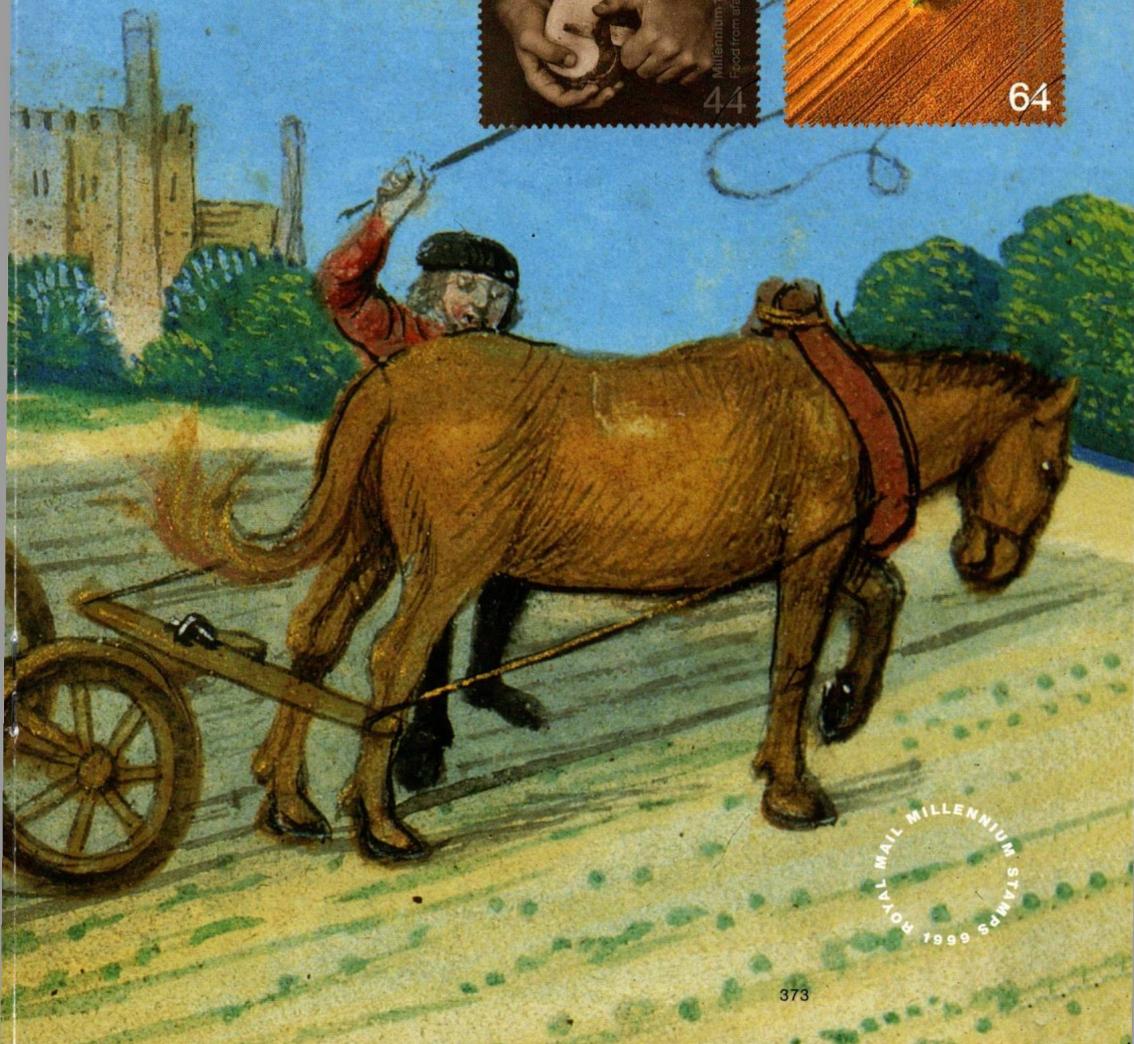
The 19p stamp, by David Tress, features strip farming. This dates back many centuries and is still practised today at the Nottinghamshire village of Laxton.

The 26p, by Christopher Wormell, represents mechanical farming practices introduced during the agricultural revolution, which preceded the industrial revolution in the 18th century.

The 44p, *Food from afar* by Tessa Traeger, features the potato. Introduced into Britain by European travellers, by the 18th century it was the staple crop to feed the poor.

The 64p stamp, by Richard Cooke, is entitled *Satellite agriculture*. New techniques enable farmers to detect variations in crops and soil, bringing significant environmental benefits.

Below, medieval ploughmen, from a Book of Hours (by permission of The British Library).



Cylinders and colours

19p P84 phosphor ● 1A grey-black ● 1B greenish yellow ● 1C cerise ● 1D new blue ● 1E silver

26p P85 phosphor ● 1A chestnut ● 1B orange-brown ● 1C violet-blue ● 1D grey-black ● 1E pale turquoise-green ● 1F silver

44p P85 phosphor ● 1A silver ● 1B yellow-brown ● 1C brown ● 1D grey-black

64p P85 phosphor ● 1A deep brown ● 1B greenish yellow ● 2C magenta ● 1D new blue ● 1E silver

Phosphor numbers are opposite row 18. On the 26p, 44p and 64p, phosphor bands are vignetted (they fade towards their edges), to reduce their impact on the stamp design.

The **44p** value, inscribed 'Food from afar', features the potato. From the 16th century, the British Empire provided Britons with a range of food-stuff of unparalleled diversity. The potato had a major impact. Grown originally by the indigenous peoples of South America, it was introduced into Britain by European travellers. Initially grown for medicinal purposes, by the 18th century it was the staple crop to feed the poor. The stamp was designed by Tessa Traeger.

The **64p** stamp, designed by Richard Cooke, is entitled Satellite agriculture. New techniques, exploiting photographic and navigation satellites, enable farmers to detect variations in crops and soil. By applying pesticides and fertilisers to those parts, farmers can greatly reduce chemicals and costs. The system has significant environmental benefits.



Invented in 1701 by Jethro Tull (1674-1741), a Berkshire landowner, the seed drill sowed seeds individually in rows - replacing the wasteful practice of scattering by hand, and allowing for efficient weeding. Encouraging change was the continued growth and integration of the market economy as transport links improved and population growth fostered demand, as with the spread of the potato. Introduced into Britain from South America, the potato, initially grown for its medicinal properties in the sixteenth century, had become a common food by the end of the eighteenth. In some places it fed the newly emerging urban workforce. Other new foods, and new sources of produce, were changing people's diet. By the nineteenth century our growing cities were

public. Satellite and computer technology are playing an increasing role here: data from satellites observing fields can be used with information from equipment on the tractor or combine harvester that measures the yield from each part of the field. Areas where crops are flourishing or failing can be pinpointed and action taken.

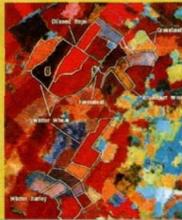
Farmers and farming increasingly share the countryside with other interests and activities, but they continue to be key to the nation's economy and identity. The Farmers' Tale is a millennia-old one of our relationship to the land and the environment.

The Domesday Book of 1086 charted England as a country where virtually the entire population was engaged in agriculture with little or no industry or commerce and very few towns.



Medieval life rested on a subsistence level - a rearing cycle of fall to produce corn for bread, barley for ale, sheep for wool, goats for milk and pigs for meat.

Modern satellite technology enables farmers to limit the use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides, reducing the environmental impact.



Presentation pack The well-illustrated pack above (price £1.90) will be available from philatelic outlets and main post offices.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets about a week before 7 September, price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of the Bureau or Laxton (strip farming) must reach the Bureau by 7 September. Price £2.22 UK (including VAT) or £1.89 overseas (no VAT).

Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, St Stephens Street, Birmingham B6 4AA (Laxton postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD9921' (Bureau), or 'FD9922' (Laxton). Covers can be posted or handed in at main post offices for the Laxton postmark. A non-pictorial Laxton postmark is also available from the Birmingham Handstamp Centre, request 'FD9922 NP'.

Bilingual Welsh/English versions of the Laxton pictorial and non-pictorial handstamps can be obtained by sending covers to the Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, Cardiff CF1 1AA, quoting reference FD9922 Bil (pictorial) and FD9922 NP Bil (non-pictorial).

Sponsored handstamps will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from the Bureau (£10 UK/Europe; £21.75 elsewhere). Covers may bear just the 19p Farmers' Tale stamp for any philatelic postmark in use on 7 September.

MILLENNIUM PHILATELIC PRODUCTS A well-illustrated Farmers' Tale pack (price £1.90) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets. A Millennium Stamps Album, with pages for the 1999 issues, also three FDC and three presentation pack pages, is available from the British Philatelic Bureau. Price: album and slipcase £19.99; sets of pages only £9.99. A presentation case has been produced to display the Millennium packs and covers. Enquiries: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT ●

Millennium stamp book The second Millennium stamp book will go on sale on 21 September. This contains a pane of eight 1st class NV1 definitives and a pane of two 26p Farmers' Tale stamps with surrounding margin, giving a miniature sheet appearance. The book, price £2.60, will be available from the Bureau and PO Counters philatelic outlets only. The stamps are printed by Walsall in gravure; the Farmers' Tale stamps issued in sheets on 7 September are by De La Rue. Specialist collectors may notice differences in the gum and/or phosphor reaction between stamps from the two printers. There will be no first day facilities and panes from this book will not qualify for First Day of Issue postmarks in use on 21 September for the World Changers prestige stamp book. Covers can, however, be posted for other philatelic postmarks as announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin*.

The first Millennium book, issued on 12 May, contains a pane of eight 1st class NV1s and a pane of one 26p Settlers' Tale and one 26p Workers' Tale stamps ●



Technical details

Printer De La Rue Security Print

Process Gravure

Size 37 × 35mm

Sheets 100

Perforation 14 × 14.5

Phosphor One band 19p ●
two bands others

Gum PVA

Central sheet gutter Vertical

