

## **BU Honorary Graduate Citation - Minette Batters**

Chancellor/Pro-Chancellor,

As President of the National Farmers' Union, Minette Batters represents the interests of 47,000 food-producing businesses across England and Wales and is leading the campaign to achieve Net Zero in British agriculture by 2040.

Minette runs a tenanted family farm in Wiltshire and first became involved with the NFU as County Chair, before being elected to Deputy President, and then President in 2018. She has since led the organisation through some of its most challenging times, as the combined effects of climate change, Brexit, the coronavirus pandemic, and war in Ukraine has put issues of food production and supply under increased pressure.

Despite being born into a farming family, Minette was encouraged by her parents to pursue other interests. A sporty child, she was longlisted for the Junior British Eventing Team and considered a career in point-to-point racing, before training as a Cordon Bleu chef and running her own catering business for 20 years. On taking over the farm in 1998, Minette set about a programme of improvements and has since expanded the cow herd and diversified into horse livery and venue hire.

During her leadership of the NFU, Minette has been keen to shift the public conversation from farming to food; a subject which she says affects everyone and in which people are taking an increased interest. Despite being terrified by the thought of public speaking 15 years ago, she has come to enjoy the opportunity to represent the views of members and to meet with key decision makers to lobby for positive change.

Her advice to others pursuing leadership roles is to be authentic, to consider the importance of work life balance, and to be wary of disappearing down the 'rabbit hole' of social media negativity.

Chancellor/Pro-Chancellor, I have the honour to present Minette Batters, and I ask you to confer upon her the degree of Doctor of Science, *honoris causa*.