

26 November 2015

**Countrywide Farmers plc  
("Countrywide" or the "Company")**

**Board changes**

Countrywide Farmers plc, one of the UK's leading suppliers of products, services and advice to the rural community, announces that its Non-Executive Chairman, Nigel Hall, has confirmed his intention to retire from the Board at the Company's AGM in April 2016. Nigel Hall has been a Non-Executive Director since 2005 and Chairman since November 2007. He will be replaced by Gareth Thomas, who brings a wealth of retail experience following an extensive career with John Lewis plc, together with holding a number of non-executive roles.

**Commenting on his decision, Nigel Hall said** *"Following the disposal of our bulk agriculture businesses earlier this year, the clarification of our strategy to develop Countrywide Farmers Retail, LPG and Turf and Amenity businesses and the recent acquisition of Cornwall Farmers, the Company is now well positioned to deliver long term shareholder value. With these foundations in place I have decided that this is an appropriate time to retire as Chairman."*

Gareth Thomas will join the Board on 4 January 2016 as Non-Executive Director and will take over the role of Non-Executive Chairman following the AGM in April 2016.

Gareth began his career with John Lewis as a graduate trainee in 1979. In 2000 he was appointed to the main board of John Lewis as Director, Retail Operations, then was Director, Design and Development before retiring from the role of Retail Director in 2010. Latterly, Gareth had responsibility for £3 billion turnover and over 30,000 Partner employees, as well as property, design and new formats. As its longest serving Director, he was instrumental in the modernisation and transformation of the department store group, including building its multi-channel capabilities to the point where the on-line business accounted for around one third of total turnover. Since 2010, Gareth has held a number of non-executive positions including non-executive directorships on the Boards of Share plc Group, and Shoppers Stop, India. He was also until recently Trustee and Deputy Chairman of Save the Children, and is currently Trustee of TATE and Chairman of Tate Enterprises Ltd., and Trustee of the American Museum in Britain.

**Commenting on the Board changes, John Hardman, Chief Executive Officer, said:** "Nigel has made an outstanding contribution to the business over the last ten years and we are all incredibly grateful for his support, leadership and guidance during that time. Nigel's departure and the arrival of Gareth comes at a time of transition when we have refocused our Retail business and taken positive action to support further expansion and profit growth in our energy business. Gareth's experience in retail will be invaluable as we continue to extend the reach of our store network and e-commerce offering. I look forward to working with Gareth at a time when the business is well positioned for future growth."

Following the change of accounting reference date from 31 May to 29 November the Company expects to release final results for the 18 month period at the end of February 2016 followed by an AGM on the 27<sup>th</sup> April 2016.

***The Directors of Countrywide Farmers plc accept full responsibility for this statement***

Find more information about Countrywide at [www.countrywidefarmers.co.uk](http://www.countrywidefarmers.co.uk)

**Countrywide Farmers plc**

John Hardman (CEO)

Julie Wirth (CFO)

**Tel: 01386 429511**

**Walbrook PR Ltd**

Paul McManus (Media Relations)

**Tel: 020 7933 8780** or Mob: 07980 541 893  
[countrywide@walbrookpr.com](mailto:countrywide@walbrookpr.com)