1

00:00:00,710 --> 00:00:05,230

[Music]

2

00:00:02,020 --> 00:00:05,230

[Applause]

3

00:00:08,320 --> 00:00:13,519

Hello and welcome to Ear to the Ground,

4

00:00:11,120 --> 00:00:15,440

the agricultural podcast brought to you

5

00:00:13,519 --> 00:00:17,840

by Farming Connect.

6

00:00:15,440 --> 00:00:18,640

I'm your host, Aled Jones and today I'm

7

00:00:17,840 --> 00:00:21,279

joined by

8

00:00:18,640 --> 00:00:22,560

Tom Evans of Pendre farm in

9

00:00:21,279 --> 00:00:24,880

Llanfihangel-y-Creuddyn

10

00:00:22,560 --> 00:00:26,480

near Aberystwyth, one of Farming

11

00:00:24,880 --> 00:00:28,800

Connect’s demonstration

12

00:00:26,480 --> 00:00:29,679

sites. Well, thank

13

00:00:28,800 --> 00:00:32,079

you Tom

14

00:00:29,679 --> 00:00:34,399

for joining us today. Now, tell me, how are

15

00:00:32,079 --> 00:00:36,800

things and how are you keeping?

16

00:00:34,399 --> 00:00:38,239

Yes, not bad at all Aled. The sun is shining.

17

00:00:36,800 --> 00:00:41,840

18

00:00:38,239 --> 00:00:43,680

We are a south-facing farm and

19

00:00:41,840 --> 00:00:45,840

like every other farmer, I could do with a bit

20

00:00:43,680 --> 00:00:48,480

of rain now, but the

21

00:00:45,840 --> 00:00:49,760

stock have done quite

22

00:00:48,480 --> 00:00:51,600

well in the last couple of weeks after

23

00:00:49,760 --> 00:00:53,520

the spring we’ve had. But

24

00:00:51,600 --> 00:00:54,559

I'm watching the Met Office quite

25

00:00:53,520 --> 00:00:56,559

closely to see if there’s a bit of

26

00:00:54,559 --> 00:00:58,000

rain coming.

27

00:00:56,559 --> 00:00:59,600

We're recording this podcast

28

00:00:58,000 --> 00:01:01,920

towards the end of June and

29

00:00:59,600 --> 00:01:03,840

it's been a very dry spell at the moment,

30

00:01:01,920 --> 00:01:05,680

so a lot of farmers are hoping

31

00:01:03,840 --> 00:01:07,119

for rain soon. But the growth

32

00:01:05,680 --> 00:01:08,720

rates have been very

33

00:01:07,119 --> 00:01:10,479

impressive, as no doubt we will come on to

34

00:01:08,720 --> 00:01:12,479

talk about it in just

35

00:01:10,479 --> 00:01:14,400

a moment. But some of our

36

00:01:12,479 --> 00:01:16,960

listeners, Tom, will know you

37

00:01:14,400 --> 00:01:18,960

well, others might not know Tom

38

00:01:16,960 --> 00:01:21,759

Pendre that well, or as I know you,

39

00:01:18,960 --> 00:01:22,880

Tom Brynperffaith, your family farm.

40

00:01:21,759 --> 00:01:26,159

That's where you were brought up,

41

00:01:22,880 --> 00:01:26,720

in Brynperffaith, near Devil's Bridge. Tell us a

42

00:01:26,159 --> 00:01:28,960

bit about

43

00:01:26,720 --> 00:01:31,439

your upbringing on what is a very

44

00:01:28,960 --> 00:01:33,280

traditional family farm?

45

00:01:31,439 --> 00:01:35,119

We were brought up, as you said

46

00:01:33,280 --> 00:01:36,000

in Brynperffaith on the outskirts of

47

00:01:35,119 --> 00:01:37,600

Devil’s Bridge.

48

00:01:36,000 --> 00:01:40,560

It's a very traditional beef and sheep

49

00:01:37,600 --> 00:01:41,040

farm. We were taught from a very young

50

00:01:40,560 --> 00:01:42,560

age.

51

00:01:41,040 --> 00:01:44,960

We're quite fortunate as our father was

52

00:01:42,560 --> 00:01:47,439

a very keen stockman and

53

00:01:44,960 --> 00:01:48,640

that was drilled into us from a very

54

00:01:47,439 --> 00:01:50,399

young age, to

55

00:01:48,640 --> 00:01:53,200

look after the stock and they would look

56

00:01:50,399 --> 00:01:55,920

after you. From that aspect, we were

57

00:01:53,200 --> 00:01:56,799

very fortunate. We were

58

00:01:55,920 --> 00:01:59,119

taken to

59

00:01:56,799 --> 00:02:00,079

all the sales and we did quite a lot of

60

00:01:59,119 --> 00:02:01,600

showing.

61

00:02:00,079 --> 00:02:03,600

I think a lot of effort was

62

00:02:01,600 --> 00:02:06,960

made by my parents then

63

00:02:03,600 --> 00:02:09,280

to get us involved and get

64

00:02:06,960 --> 00:02:10,959

us interested in the farm, and also,

65

00:02:09,280 --> 00:02:12,720

encourage us as well to

66

00:02:10,959 --> 00:02:15,040

work away from the farm.

67

00:02:12,720 --> 00:02:17,040

We often did a lot of work on

68

00:02:15,040 --> 00:02:18,640

neighboring farms and we were

69

00:02:17,040 --> 00:02:19,440

encouraged to travel.

70

00:02:18,640 --> 00:02:20,720

71

00:02:19,440 --> 00:02:22,080

We were encouraged to go to Gelli Aur

72

00:02:20,720 --> 00:02:22,720

College to study agriculture, me and my

73

00:02:22,080 --> 00:02:24,080

brother.

74

00:02:22,720 --> 00:02:26,080

We were encouraged to go to New

75

00:02:24,080 --> 00:02:29,360

Zealand to shear, to travel to

76

00:02:26,080 --> 00:02:31,280

Australia and

77

00:02:29,360 --> 00:02:33,440

we were fortunate that our

78

00:02:31,280 --> 00:02:35,440

mother and father were very

79

00:02:33,440 --> 00:02:36,879

open-minded in the

80

00:02:35,440 --> 00:02:38,160

way that

81

00:02:36,879 --> 00:02:40,560

they brought us up. We were very

82

00:02:38,160 --> 00:02:42,080

fortunate in that way. And traveling is

83

00:02:40,560 --> 00:02:43,360

important, isn't it? To broaden your

84

00:02:42,080 --> 00:02:45,519

horizons,

85

00:02:43,360 --> 00:02:46,400

and even the experience of working away

86

00:02:45,519 --> 00:02:48,239

from the farm,

87

00:02:46,400 --> 00:02:50,400

getting to know different management

88

00:02:48,239 --> 00:02:52,319

styles, and I'm sure you become a better

89

00:02:50,400 --> 00:02:54,959

farmer from having worked

90

00:02:52,319 --> 00:02:57,599

off the home family farmstead when you

91

00:02:54,959 --> 00:02:59,599

then come back to run your own business?

92

00:02:57,599 --> 00:03:01,040

Definitely. This is something that

93

00:02:59,599 --> 00:03:02,159

my father has always said since we were

94

00:03:01,040 --> 00:03:04,239

children and it’s something

95

00:03:02,159 --> 00:03:06,159

that I strongly stand by as well, that

96

00:03:04,239 --> 00:03:08,239

every farmer's son should leave the

97

00:03:06,159 --> 00:03:09,440

family farm for a period, just to see

98

00:03:08,239 --> 00:03:10,000

different approaches.

99

00:03:09,440 --> 00:03:11,840

Some things

100

00:03:10,000 --> 00:03:14,319

you won't agree with, some things you

101

00:03:11,840 --> 00:03:16,879

will take back to your family farm.

102

00:03:14,319 --> 00:03:18,959

As I

103

00:03:16,879 --> 00:03:20,800

just said, it was encouraged and

104

00:03:18,959 --> 00:03:23,040

I think going to New Zealand, I was

105

00:03:20,800 --> 00:03:25,680

very fortunate as well

106

00:03:23,040 --> 00:03:26,400

when I was in Gelli Aur college to do my

107

00:03:25,680 --> 00:03:29,200

placement

108

00:03:26,400 --> 00:03:29,920

in Breacon, in Pant Farm in

109

00:03:29,200 --> 00:03:32,400

Merthyr Cynog,

110

00:03:29,920 --> 00:03:34,560

and they were excellent stockmen and

111

00:03:32,400 --> 00:03:36,480

yes, I learned a lot there.

112

00:03:34,560 --> 00:03:38,000

At the age of

113

00:03:36,480 --> 00:03:39,200

16 or 17,

114

00:03:38,000 --> 00:03:41,519

I was having driving lessons when I was

115

00:03:39,200 --> 00:03:43,040

there,

116

00:03:41,519 --> 00:03:44,480

some of my friends were traveling

117

00:03:43,040 --> 00:03:45,840

back. My parents were very keen for me to

118

00:03:44,480 --> 00:03:46,400

stay there and I stayed for as long as I

119

00:03:45,840 --> 00:03:48,640

could and

120

00:03:46,400 --> 00:03:49,519

took as much as I

121

00:03:48,640 --> 00:03:51,440

could. So

122

00:03:49,519 --> 00:03:53,040

from that angle, they

123

00:03:51,440 --> 00:03:54,879

were very supportive in

124

00:03:53,040 --> 00:03:56,080

me seeing different people's systems.

125

00:03:54,879 --> 00:03:58,159

126

00:03:56,080 --> 00:03:59,120

Even if I didn't agree with them or

127

00:03:58,159 --> 00:04:00,640

if we did, it was

128

00:03:59,120 --> 00:04:02,000

drummed into us to go and see

129

00:04:00,640 --> 00:04:02,720

other people's systems to see what we

130

00:04:02,000 --> 00:04:04,400

could bring back

131

00:04:02,720 --> 00:04:05,760

to our own business afterwards.

132

00:04:04,400 --> 00:04:07,760

Absolutely, and it

133

00:04:05,760 --> 00:04:09,920

puts you in good stead because you're

134

00:04:07,760 --> 00:04:11,439

now running Pendre Farm.

135

00:04:09,920 --> 00:04:13,040

Tell us a bit about the background

136

00:04:11,439 --> 00:04:15,360

because it was a farm bought

137

00:04:13,040 --> 00:04:16,959

by your father having grazed it under a

138

00:04:15,360 --> 00:04:18,000

tenancy for some years, and it was an

139

00:04:16,959 --> 00:04:20,639

opportunity

140

00:04:18,000 --> 00:04:22,880

that you didn't want to go and miss?

141

00:04:20,639 --> 00:04:26,000

No, and

142

00:04:22,880 --> 00:04:27,199

it's quite a funny story really.

143

00:04:26,000 --> 00:04:28,400

I think my father was

144

00:04:27,199 --> 00:04:30,320

doing a bit of contracting bale work at the

145

00:04:28,400 --> 00:04:32,560

time and I think he bumped into

146

00:04:30,320 --> 00:04:33,759

the owner, Mr Lloyd of Pendre Farm,

147

00:04:32,560 --> 00:04:35,440

on the back roads, and

148

00:04:33,759 --> 00:04:36,960

he started talking and he said that he

149

00:04:35,440 --> 00:04:38,240

wanted to cut down, and it all went from

150

00:04:36,960 --> 00:04:40,639

there. I think we’d just started

151

00:04:38,240 --> 00:04:42,000

bringing tack sheep into the winter

152

00:04:40,639 --> 00:04:43,680

because I think he was just

153

00:04:42,000 --> 00:04:46,320

coming to an end of milking here,

154

00:04:43,680 --> 00:04:47,840

and then my father

155

00:04:46,320 --> 00:04:49,840

rented it for a good

156

00:04:47,840 --> 00:04:51,120

six or seven years, started off

157

00:04:49,840 --> 00:04:53,759

with part of the farm, and then

158

00:04:51,120 --> 00:04:54,960

the whole farm, and then he

159

00:04:53,759 --> 00:04:57,520

was very fortunate then to

160

00:04:54,960 --> 00:05:00,160

be offered the chance to buy it which he

161

00:04:57,520 --> 00:05:02,560

grasped with both hands. It has given

162

00:05:00,160 --> 00:05:03,360

me and my family a

163

00:05:02,560 --> 00:05:05,600

164

00:05:03,360 --> 00:05:06,880

fantastic start

165

00:05:05,600 --> 00:05:08,560

to capitalise on.

166

00:05:06,880 --> 00:05:10,000

Absolutely. Therefore, you farm there now with

167

00:05:08,560 --> 00:05:12,240

your wife, Beth, and

168

00:05:10,000 --> 00:05:13,440

your children. Tell us about the

169

00:05:12,240 --> 00:05:15,520

farming system. Is it

170

00:05:13,440 --> 00:05:17,440

a beef and sheep farm or is it solely a

171

00:05:15,520 --> 00:05:20,560

sheep enterprise at the moment?

172

00:05:17,440 --> 00:05:24,560

Solely a sheep enterprise

173

00:05:20,560 --> 00:05:25,120

at the moment. I rent two blocks of

174

00:05:24,560 --> 00:05:28,240

land

175

00:05:25,120 --> 00:05:30,720

alongside Pendre.

176

00:05:28,240 --> 00:05:31,840

I still work quite closely with my

177

00:05:30,720 --> 00:05:33,600

father.

178

00:05:31,840 --> 00:05:35,680

It's two separate businesses

179

00:05:33,600 --> 00:05:38,240

but we come together

180

00:05:35,680 --> 00:05:38,880

at least one, two days a

181

00:05:38,240 --> 00:05:41,600

week to

182

00:05:38,880 --> 00:05:42,639

get jobs done, and obviously, I’m

183

00:05:41,600 --> 00:05:44,240

quite fortunate

184

00:05:42,639 --> 00:05:45,680

in the fact that I can get a

185

00:05:44,240 --> 00:05:49,520

lot of machines from him and

186

00:05:45,680 --> 00:05:52,320

I can offer labour to him

187

00:05:49,520 --> 00:05:53,440

in return. It’s an

188

00:05:52,320 --> 00:05:56,560

all-sheep farm.

189

00:05:53,440 --> 00:05:59,120

My father has got some cattle,

190

00:05:56,560 --> 00:05:59,919

not many, but we're all sheep

191

00:05:59,120 --> 00:06:03,280

orientated

192

00:05:59,919 --> 00:06:04,479

with

193

00:06:03,280 --> 00:06:06,560

two different systems with breeding

194

00:06:04,479 --> 00:06:08,800

stock and Pendre is commercially

195

00:06:06,560 --> 00:06:12,400

Mule ewes and Texel crosses, and

196

00:06:08,800 --> 00:06:13,120

we lamb here first indoors to

197

00:06:12,400 --> 00:06:17,120

get

198

00:06:13,120 --> 00:06:19,280

lambs away by May, hopefully, or

199

00:06:17,120 --> 00:06:20,720

middle of June. They're a bit behind this

200

00:06:19,280 --> 00:06:24,080

year,

201

00:06:20,720 --> 00:06:25,360

then

202

00:06:24,080 --> 00:06:27,520

the sheep from the other two holdings

203

00:06:25,360 --> 00:06:29,360

come back here,

204

00:06:27,520 --> 00:06:30,639

so we need to produce enough silage here

205

00:06:29,360 --> 00:06:34,240

as well for

206

00:06:30,639 --> 00:06:36,800

approximately 550, 580

207

00:06:34,240 --> 00:06:37,919

ewes. Pendre

208

00:06:36,800 --> 00:06:39,680

is a

209

00:06:37,919 --> 00:06:41,120

210

00:06:39,680 --> 00:06:42,720

211

00:06:41,120 --> 00:06:45,600

great farm, but it's a bit on the small

212

00:06:42,720 --> 00:06:47,120

side. It's just short of 60 acres.

213

00:06:45,600 --> 00:06:48,800

There’s a lot of pressure on it on

214

00:06:47,120 --> 00:06:50,160

different times of the year.

215

00:06:48,800 --> 00:06:52,000

So you've got to make sure your grassland

216

00:06:50,160 --> 00:06:53,759

management is spot on

217

00:06:52,000 --> 00:06:55,280

to make sure you've got sufficient feed

218

00:06:53,759 --> 00:06:58,479

for the stock and also got enough

219

00:06:55,280 --> 00:06:59,840

forage for the winter. Tell us a bit

220

00:06:58,479 --> 00:07:02,479

about the sheep breeds because I know

221

00:06:59,840 --> 00:07:04,880

you're a keen, keen stockman. What works

222

00:07:02,479 --> 00:07:07,440

well with you at Pendre?

223

00:07:04,880 --> 00:07:08,400

Well, Pendre, as I just

224

00:07:07,440 --> 00:07:10,319

touched on,

225

00:07:08,400 --> 00:07:11,440

is a commercial site,

226

00:07:10,319 --> 00:07:14,560

commercial ewes

227

00:07:11,440 --> 00:07:15,680

looking for an early fat lamb. On the

228

00:07:14,560 --> 00:07:17,680

other holding, I've got

229

00:07:15,680 --> 00:07:20,960

approximately 200

230

00:07:17,680 --> 00:07:23,039

Welsh ewes, Tregaron Welsh ewes.

231

00:07:20,960 --> 00:07:25,280

150 of them have recently been

232

00:07:23,039 --> 00:07:28,080

entered into the Hill Ram Scheme,

233

00:07:25,280 --> 00:07:29,120

which is something that I was quite

234

00:07:28,080 --> 00:07:32,160

keen to establish.

235

00:07:29,120 --> 00:07:33,919

So far, it's going well.

236

00:07:32,160 --> 00:07:36,639

237

00:07:33,919 --> 00:07:38,400

It's a project with Hybu Cig Cymru

238

00:07:36,639 --> 00:07:40,160

and Innovis where we're

239

00:07:38,400 --> 00:07:41,840

recording the ewes. We started in the

240

00:07:40,160 --> 00:07:44,000

autumn last year by taking

241

00:07:41,840 --> 00:07:45,039

weights and a DNA sample of the ewes

242

00:07:44,000 --> 00:07:46,879

that were entered into the project

243

00:07:45,039 --> 00:07:49,120

and the condition score, and later on in

244

00:07:46,879 --> 00:07:51,759

the year,

245

00:07:49,120 --> 00:07:53,599

a scanner was also rented, and around

246

00:07:51,759 --> 00:07:56,560

three weeks ago, we were

247

00:07:53,599 --> 00:07:57,680

at marking time, maybe a bit

248

00:07:56,560 --> 00:08:00,800

more than three weeks,

249

00:07:57,680 --> 00:08:01,599

and we were taking DNA sample of the lambs

250

00:08:00,800 --> 00:08:05,039

and taking

251

00:08:01,599 --> 00:08:06,080

the weight of the lambs. In around a

252

00:08:05,039 --> 00:08:09,120

months’ time,

253

00:08:06,080 --> 00:08:11,360

we will be taking another weight and a

254

00:08:09,120 --> 00:08:14,319

back fat scan

255

00:08:11,360 --> 00:08:15,919

from those lambs to establish an EBV for

256

00:08:14,319 --> 00:08:18,800

each and every

257

00:08:15,919 --> 00:08:20,080

lamb.

258

00:08:18,800 --> 00:08:22,599

259

00:08:20,080 --> 00:08:24,319

The project is

260

00:08:22,599 --> 00:08:25,759

about

261

00:08:24,319 --> 00:08:27,440

identifying

262

00:08:25,759 --> 00:08:30,080

the

263

00:08:27,440 --> 00:08:30,879

strongest and the weakest sheep

264

00:08:30,080 --> 00:08:32,880

within your

265

00:08:30,879 --> 00:08:34,000

flock and to establish an

266

00:08:32,880 --> 00:08:36,000

EBV and

267

00:08:34,000 --> 00:08:37,599

make big decisions from those EBV's as

268

00:08:36,000 --> 00:08:40,159

well. It's something that I'm

269

00:08:37,599 --> 00:08:41,760

very interested in. And then, we sell

270

00:08:40,159 --> 00:08:45,040

approximately

271

00:08:41,760 --> 00:08:46,160

50 rams as well, me and Beth. I

272

00:08:45,040 --> 00:08:48,720

didn't mention earlier, but

273

00:08:46,160 --> 00:08:50,000

we also have pure Texel ewes,

274

00:08:48,720 --> 00:08:51,760

they are not pedigree, they're pure Texel ewes which

275

00:08:50,000 --> 00:08:54,160

we cross with a Blue Face.

276

00:08:51,760 --> 00:08:55,680

The numbers of the

277

00:08:54,160 --> 00:08:57,200

pure Texels have dwindled.

278

00:08:55,680 --> 00:08:58,959

We had the first Texel x Blue Face

279

00:08:57,200 --> 00:09:00,800

and

280

00:08:58,959 --> 00:09:02,000

since then, we've kept the first crosses,

281

00:09:00,800 --> 00:09:03,920

the F1’s,

282

00:09:02,000 --> 00:09:06,000

and then we're putting a Texel Blue Face

283

00:09:03,920 --> 00:09:07,920

back on the Texel Blue Face ewes.

284

00:09:06,000 --> 00:09:09,040

We have around 20 of Texel Blue Face

285

00:09:07,920 --> 00:09:12,560

rams,

286

00:09:09,040 --> 00:09:15,600

approximately 30, 35

287

00:09:12,560 --> 00:09:17,519

of the Tregaron Welsh rams and

288

00:09:15,600 --> 00:09:19,279

then also, I’ve got Welsh

289

00:09:17,519 --> 00:09:21,920

Hill Speckled Face sheep as well.

290

00:09:19,279 --> 00:09:23,040

At home, in Brynperffaith farm

291

00:09:21,920 --> 00:09:24,480

years ago, it was all Welsh

292

00:09:23,040 --> 00:09:26,240

Speckled Face and it was

293

00:09:24,480 --> 00:09:28,240

predominantly Welsh and Speckled Face

294

00:09:26,240 --> 00:09:29,839

sheep you saw across Devil’s Bridge.

295

00:09:28,240 --> 00:09:31,440

But there's no point hiding from the

296

00:09:29,839 --> 00:09:32,880

fact that they have lost

297

00:09:31,440 --> 00:09:35,279

popularity in the last couple years, and

298

00:09:32,880 --> 00:09:37,120

the numbers have dwindled significantly

299

00:09:35,279 --> 00:09:39,120

and the demand for the rams obviously

300

00:09:37,120 --> 00:09:41,760

has dwindled. So I've cut

301

00:09:39,120 --> 00:09:42,720

my own ewes down because I didn't

302

00:09:41,760 --> 00:09:44,720

quite have the market

303

00:09:42,720 --> 00:09:46,480

for the rams, but it’s a breed that

304

00:09:44,720 --> 00:09:48,880

is quite close to my heart,

305

00:09:46,480 --> 00:09:50,720

even though some of my friends

306

00:09:48,880 --> 00:09:53,040

have a little chuckle at me. But I

307

00:09:50,720 --> 00:09:54,240

do think so much of them.

308

00:09:53,040 --> 00:09:55,600

When they're good, they're very good.

309

00:09:54,240 --> 00:09:56,640

They're fantastic sheep and really

310

00:09:55,600 --> 00:09:58,880

milky

311

00:09:56,640 --> 00:10:00,720

when they're in their prime. From now

312

00:09:58,880 --> 00:10:02,839

to the sales in the autumn, they

313

00:10:00,720 --> 00:10:05,600

really catch your eye, and

314

00:10:02,839 --> 00:10:06,640

yes, my heart goes to the Speckles

315

00:10:05,600 --> 00:10:08,720

but

316

00:10:06,640 --> 00:10:10,160

my brain says to go for the Tregaron

317

00:10:08,720 --> 00:10:10,880

Welsh and the other breeds that I

318

00:10:10,160 --> 00:10:12,480

mentioned

319

00:10:10,880 --> 00:10:14,640

earlier. But no, I’m very fond of the

320

00:10:12,480 --> 00:10:17,120

Speckles. It's that tension of the head and

321

00:10:14,640 --> 00:10:19,760

the heart, isn't it?

322

00:10:17,120 --> 00:10:20,480

But obviously, by selling the

323

00:10:19,760 --> 00:10:22,079

rams,

324

00:10:20,480 --> 00:10:23,760

it's quite a useful income stream in

325

00:10:22,079 --> 00:10:25,360

addition to selling the fat lambs as

326

00:10:23,760 --> 00:10:28,399

well, so it's quite an important

327

00:10:25,360 --> 00:10:30,720

component to the business. Yes,

328

00:10:28,399 --> 00:10:32,160

it's a very big part of the business by

329

00:10:30,720 --> 00:10:35,760

now.

330

00:10:32,160 --> 00:10:37,519

With the Texel x Blue Face,

331

00:10:35,760 --> 00:10:40,160

I use a lot of advertising through

332

00:10:37,519 --> 00:10:42,160

social media, which is proved to be

333

00:10:40,160 --> 00:10:45,519

successful in the last few years and

334

00:10:42,160 --> 00:10:47,040

so far, so good. I've

335

00:10:45,519 --> 00:10:48,079

established a customer base.

336

00:10:47,040 --> 00:10:49,920

I've had returned

337

00:10:48,079 --> 00:10:52,640

customers in the last few years.

338

00:10:49,920 --> 00:10:54,720

The reports I've had back from

339

00:10:52,640 --> 00:10:56,079

previous purchases are very positive and

340

00:10:54,720 --> 00:10:58,079

they like to have Texel x Blue Face

341

00:10:56,079 --> 00:11:00,640

for crossing on to

342

00:10:58,079 --> 00:11:01,600

predominantly hill ewes, so they've got

343

00:11:00,640 --> 00:11:05,040

344

00:11:01,600 --> 00:11:07,519

a good ewe lamb and

345

00:11:05,040 --> 00:11:09,279

the male lamb then that has

346

00:11:07,519 --> 00:11:14,240

a better carcass

347

00:11:09,279 --> 00:11:16,240

than the Mules.

348

00:11:14,240 --> 00:11:17,519

They have proved to be very popular and

349

00:11:16,240 --> 00:11:18,720

the video goes up on

350

00:11:17,519 --> 00:11:20,240

Facebook usually around this time of

351

00:11:18,720 --> 00:11:20,800

year or in September, what I got

352

00:11:20,240 --> 00:11:23,360

available,

353

00:11:20,800 --> 00:11:25,120

and I think last year, I sold

354

00:11:23,360 --> 00:11:28,160

around just short of 20 of them.

355

00:11:25,120 --> 00:11:30,959

The Tregaron Welsh then,

356

00:11:28,160 --> 00:11:32,560

I always choose 15 of the best ones

357

00:11:30,959 --> 00:11:35,040

for the Tregaron ram sale

358

00:11:32,560 --> 00:11:37,200

in September, and we are quite fortunate

359

00:11:35,040 --> 00:11:40,560

that Aled Ellis in Lovesgrove

360

00:11:37,200 --> 00:11:41,200

holds a ram sale for local ram

361

00:11:40,560 --> 00:11:44,160

leaders,

362

00:11:41,200 --> 00:11:46,079

which is growing

363

00:11:44,160 --> 00:11:46,720

every year and growing in popularity, and

364

00:11:46,079 --> 00:11:48,480

365

00:11:46,720 --> 00:11:49,839

I've been there to support that sale and

366

00:11:48,480 --> 00:11:52,240

they have supported me as well

367

00:11:49,839 --> 00:11:54,240

from the beginning, and I'm quite

368

00:11:52,240 --> 00:11:57,600

happy to say that I've built a

369

00:11:54,240 --> 00:11:58,959

customer base up there too.

370

00:11:57,600 --> 00:12:00,399

Then towards the end of the season,

371

00:11:58,959 --> 00:12:01,120

if there's a few left over, there's

372

00:12:00,399 --> 00:12:03,040

always people who

373

00:12:01,120 --> 00:12:04,480

contact you asking for a ram and then

374

00:12:03,040 --> 00:12:07,040

the Speckles then go to the

375

00:12:04,480 --> 00:12:08,480

Society Speckle Sale in Welshpool

376

00:12:07,040 --> 00:12:10,880

in September.

377

00:12:08,480 --> 00:12:12,720

As you said,

378

00:12:10,880 --> 00:12:14,880

the

379

00:12:12,720 --> 00:12:15,920

majority of my fat lambs go from now

380

00:12:14,880 --> 00:12:17,760

until the

381

00:12:15,920 --> 00:12:18,959

middle of July and then from September,

382

00:12:17,760 --> 00:12:21,279

October,

383

00:12:18,959 --> 00:12:23,040

and it's a very important income to the

384

00:12:21,279 --> 00:12:24,560

business fund by now.

385

00:12:23,040 --> 00:12:26,079

And picking up on the work you're

386

00:12:24,560 --> 00:12:27,920

doing with EBV's,

387

00:12:26,079 --> 00:12:29,200

are you selling any rams with

388

00:12:27,920 --> 00:12:31,279

performance recorded

389

00:12:29,200 --> 00:12:32,480

figures alongside them? And do you see

390

00:12:31,279 --> 00:12:34,320

that

391

00:12:32,480 --> 00:12:35,920

as an important component or growing

392

00:12:34,320 --> 00:12:36,720

market or a market you think you can

393

00:12:35,920 --> 00:12:39,440

gain

394

00:12:36,720 --> 00:12:41,200

more return or higher prices if you can

395

00:12:39,440 --> 00:12:44,880

secure some really impressive

396

00:12:41,200 --> 00:12:48,240

performance figures? Yes, I do hope so.

397

00:12:44,880 --> 00:12:50,000

That is another part of

398

00:12:48,240 --> 00:12:51,760

my interest of wanting to go into the

399

00:12:50,000 --> 00:12:55,279

scheme.

400

00:12:51,760 --> 00:12:57,200

Yes, I was

401

00:12:55,279 --> 00:12:58,560

fortunate enough to work in Aberystwyth

402

00:12:57,200 --> 00:13:00,720

University for

403

00:12:58,560 --> 00:13:01,920

10 years, and it started off as a lambing

404

00:13:00,720 --> 00:13:05,440

job and then

405

00:13:01,920 --> 00:13:07,440

in the last few years, I ended up as the

406

00:13:05,440 --> 00:13:09,120

head shepherd on the farm, and we

407

00:13:07,440 --> 00:13:12,720

were performance recording.

408

00:13:09,120 --> 00:13:13,440

My interest in the Texel

409

00:13:12,720 --> 00:13:14,959

breed grew from there.

410

00:13:13,440 --> 00:13:16,399

You could see the benefits of

411

00:13:14,959 --> 00:13:18,000

performance recording, to be able to

412

00:13:16,399 --> 00:13:20,000

identify the rams

413

00:13:18,000 --> 00:13:21,279

that had the best traits, and

414

00:13:20,000 --> 00:13:21,680

that was something that I was very interested in,

415

00:13:21,279 --> 00:13:24,240

that

416

00:13:21,680 --> 00:13:26,160

eight-week wait to get those lambs away,

417

00:13:24,240 --> 00:13:29,279

to get them away as soon

418

00:13:26,160 --> 00:13:30,639

as possible. Going back

419

00:13:29,279 --> 00:13:31,760

to trying to put that over to

420

00:13:30,639 --> 00:13:34,000

the Welsh, I think

421

00:13:31,760 --> 00:13:34,880

with the Welsh, it’s just getting the

422

00:13:34,000 --> 00:13:36,800

balance of it, the balance

423

00:13:34,880 --> 00:13:38,720

of using it to identify the bottom 20%

424

00:13:36,800 --> 00:13:41,040

of the flock.

425

00:13:38,720 --> 00:13:41,839

And to sell rams, there's

426

00:13:41,040 --> 00:13:44,880

definitely

427

00:13:41,839 --> 00:13:46,320

a growing demand for

428

00:13:44,880 --> 00:13:48,880

performance recorded rams

429

00:13:46,320 --> 00:13:49,519

and the Prohill group,

430

00:13:48,880 --> 00:13:50,959

431

00:13:49,519 --> 00:13:52,959

they sell through Innovis at the

432

00:13:50,959 --> 00:13:56,560

moment, and yes,

433

00:13:52,959 --> 00:13:59,040

there seems to be a demand

434

00:13:56,560 --> 00:14:00,399

for performance recorded rams.

435

00:13:59,040 --> 00:14:02,639

I'm hoping, I obviously

436

00:14:00,399 --> 00:14:04,079

won't have any rams for that sale, but

437

00:14:02,639 --> 00:14:05,600

if I do have

438

00:14:04,079 --> 00:14:07,480

rams that do qualify with high

439

00:14:05,600 --> 00:14:10,240

EBV's to go to sale, they won’t be able to go to the sale until

440

00:14:07,480 --> 00:14:11,519

2022. I'll have an EBV at the end

441

00:14:10,240 --> 00:14:12,720

of the autumn for

442

00:14:11,519 --> 00:14:14,720

the lambs that have born this year.

443

00:14:12,720 --> 00:14:17,440

They will be yearlings the year after.

444

00:14:14,720 --> 00:14:18,560

I'm aware that people were

445

00:14:17,440 --> 00:14:20,560

buying in that sale last year

446

00:14:18,560 --> 00:14:21,760

just off the telephone without

447

00:14:20,560 --> 00:14:24,320

even seeing the

448

00:14:21,760 --> 00:14:25,040

the rams. I don't think I could ever

449

00:14:24,320 --> 00:14:26,959

go that far.

450

00:14:25,040 --> 00:14:28,959

I'm very much the one who wants to see

451

00:14:26,959 --> 00:14:30,560

what I'm buying and

452

00:14:28,959 --> 00:14:32,560

maybe spend a bit too much time looking

453

00:14:30,560 --> 00:14:33,519

at the sheep, but the looks for me is

454

00:14:32,560 --> 00:14:34,399

important. Trying to get the

455

00:14:33,519 --> 00:14:35,920

amalgamation,

456

00:14:34,399 --> 00:14:37,839

trying to get the balance of both

457

00:14:35,920 --> 00:14:40,959

the looks and using the

458

00:14:37,839 --> 00:14:41,440

the EBV as a tool as well, trying to

459

00:14:40,959 --> 00:14:43,839

get

460

00:14:41,440 --> 00:14:45,760

that balance. Definitely. There is

461

00:14:43,839 --> 00:14:48,639

462

00:14:45,760 --> 00:14:50,160

obviously a calling for

463

00:14:48,639 --> 00:14:51,920

performance recorded, and

464

00:14:50,160 --> 00:14:54,240

the dairy sector and the

465

00:14:51,920 --> 00:14:57,040

pork sector have

466

00:14:54,240 --> 00:14:58,079

been buying stock based on figures

467

00:14:57,040 --> 00:15:00,560

for

468

00:14:58,079 --> 00:15:01,839

years now, and possibly, we

469

00:15:00,560 --> 00:15:03,680

as sheep breeders are

470

00:15:01,839 --> 00:15:06,639

slightly behind and should be

471

00:15:03,680 --> 00:15:07,519

looking at them as an example of

472

00:15:06,639 --> 00:15:10,639

how we should be

473

00:15:07,519 --> 00:15:14,000

choosing sires and bloodlines.

474

00:15:10,639 --> 00:15:15,760

Now, in addition to the breeding

475

00:15:14,000 --> 00:15:17,279

element, which is incredibly important

476

00:15:15,760 --> 00:15:20,079

and the genetics,

477

00:15:17,279 --> 00:15:22,079

is of course the feeding element, and

478

00:15:20,079 --> 00:15:22,639

to support the stocking level that

479

00:15:22,079 --> 00:15:26,079

you've got

480

00:15:22,639 --> 00:15:28,399

at Pendre, you've adopted a grazing

481

00:15:26,079 --> 00:15:30,320

management plan based on a rotational

482

00:15:28,399 --> 00:15:33,279

grazing platform.

483

00:15:30,320 --> 00:15:34,320

Have you found that to be a real plus

484

00:15:33,279 --> 00:15:36,079

for you on the farm?

485

00:15:34,320 --> 00:15:37,839

Has it enabled you to increase

486

00:15:36,079 --> 00:15:39,519

stocking numbers or improve

487

00:15:37,839 --> 00:15:41,199

your growth rates in terms of the

488

00:15:39,519 --> 00:15:43,440

grass?

489

00:15:41,199 --> 00:15:44,240

Yes, it's done both which

490

00:15:43,440 --> 00:15:47,759

is

491

00:15:44,240 --> 00:15:50,800

what I see as a real positive.

492

00:15:47,759 --> 00:15:52,399

I'm only in my second year now of

493

00:15:50,800 --> 00:15:54,800

rotational grazing, but I'm already

494

00:15:52,399 --> 00:15:56,880

seeing very early benefits.

495

00:15:54,800 --> 00:15:58,480

It's quite an

496

00:15:56,880 --> 00:16:01,920

obvious fact, but

497

00:15:58,480 --> 00:16:03,440

the more kg of

498

00:16:01,920 --> 00:16:06,160

red meat that you can produce per

499

00:16:03,440 --> 00:16:07,440

hectare (ha), the more profitable

500

00:16:06,160 --> 00:16:09,279

you're going to be. It's one of the main

501

00:16:07,440 --> 00:16:10,639

factors, the amount

502

00:16:09,279 --> 00:16:12,399

that you can produce from that

503

00:16:10,639 --> 00:16:15,199

ha,

504

00:16:12,399 --> 00:16:16,320

and also, I've seen a very big

505

00:16:15,199 --> 00:16:18,880

difference in

506

00:16:16,320 --> 00:16:20,800

the quality of grass coming back once

507

00:16:18,880 --> 00:16:23,519

you've put a mob of sheep on it

508

00:16:20,800 --> 00:16:25,199

for three days.

509

00:16:23,519 --> 00:16:26,639

The regrowth,

510

00:16:25,199 --> 00:16:28,320

it's like having a constant

511

00:16:26,639 --> 00:16:31,759

aftermath.

512

00:16:28,320 --> 00:16:33,440

I think

513

00:16:31,759 --> 00:16:35,920

in May, before I sold my culls, there was

514

00:16:33,440 --> 00:16:39,920

approximately 190 ewes

515

00:16:35,920 --> 00:16:42,560

with about 1.6 lambs, 50 odd ewe

516

00:16:39,920 --> 00:16:45,120

lambs and 50 odd rams as well,

517

00:16:42,560 --> 00:16:47,360

which I've never had such stocking rates.

518

00:16:45,120 --> 00:16:51,279

It was a bit of a

519

00:16:47,360 --> 00:16:54,800

challenge in that cold spring that we had.

520

00:16:51,279 --> 00:16:58,240

My ewe lambs, I don't think

521

00:16:54,800 --> 00:16:59,040

I fed a single kg of concentrates

522

00:16:58,240 --> 00:17:03,120

to the ewes

523

00:16:59,040 --> 00:17:07,679

after lambing. It was all grass-based.

524

00:17:03,120 --> 00:17:10,079

With regards to creeping,

525

00:17:07,679 --> 00:17:11,679

I find that it’s something that I like to

526

00:17:10,079 --> 00:17:14,400

switch on and off.

527

00:17:11,679 --> 00:17:15,280

528

00:17:14,400 --> 00:17:17,520

529

00:17:15,280 --> 00:17:18,559

The way I've taken on to

530

00:17:17,520 --> 00:17:20,959

the

531

00:17:18,559 --> 00:17:22,240

rotational grazing and the new

532

00:17:20,959 --> 00:17:25,439

system is

533

00:17:22,240 --> 00:17:27,919

to go into it

534

00:17:25,439 --> 00:17:29,840

open-minded, but I did feel this

535

00:17:27,919 --> 00:17:33,039

year that there was a place

536

00:17:29,840 --> 00:17:33,520

to creep because it was an added

537

00:17:33,039 --> 00:17:35,360

value

538

00:17:33,520 --> 00:17:37,039

to the lambs to hit that early market,

539

00:17:35,360 --> 00:17:39,440

which I think I had

540

00:17:37,039 --> 00:17:40,400

approximately 120 lambs which is almost

541

00:17:39,440 --> 00:17:43,600

double off

542

00:17:40,400 --> 00:17:44,880

before the first week in June, just

543

00:17:43,600 --> 00:17:48,240

to hit those markets.

544

00:17:44,880 --> 00:17:50,960

The long-term aim is to be

545

00:17:48,240 --> 00:17:51,919

as grass-dependent as possible. I do

546

00:17:50,960 --> 00:17:54,960

think there is a place

547

00:17:51,919 --> 00:17:56,240

to move things around if you

548

00:17:54,960 --> 00:17:58,799

do see an opportunity

549

00:17:56,240 --> 00:18:00,160

to change and

550

00:17:58,799 --> 00:18:03,200

be diverse within the

551

00:18:00,160 --> 00:18:04,880

system.

552

00:18:03,200 --> 00:18:07,440

Possibly, I've said it before and I

553

00:18:04,880 --> 00:18:10,480

stand by it,

554

00:18:07,440 --> 00:18:11,679

even though I'm

555

00:18:10,480 --> 00:18:13,200

only 36,

556

00:18:11,679 --> 00:18:14,559

in my farming career,

557

00:18:13,200 --> 00:18:16,559

this is probably one of the best decisions that

558

00:18:14,559 --> 00:18:18,160

I've ever made,

559

00:18:16,559 --> 00:18:20,400

changing the system to rotational

560

00:18:18,160 --> 00:18:21,840

grazing. Definitely.

561

00:18:20,400 --> 00:18:23,919

And the benefits you've seen, and

562

00:18:21,840 --> 00:18:25,760

obviously, you've been very lucky to have

563

00:18:23,919 --> 00:18:27,360

been supported by some experts

564

00:18:25,760 --> 00:18:29,520

being a Farming Connect demonstration

565

00:18:27,360 --> 00:18:31,520

site, and this is an area where

566

00:18:29,520 --> 00:18:32,880

you're very much looking into at

567

00:18:31,520 --> 00:18:34,960

this moment in time which is whether

568

00:18:32,880 --> 00:18:38,080

rotational grazing can increase

569

00:18:34,960 --> 00:18:38,400

the organic matter in the soil. And

570

00:18:38,080 --> 00:18:41,280

that

571

00:18:38,400 --> 00:18:43,520

in turn can then increase the carbon

572

00:18:41,280 --> 00:18:44,720

storage capacity of your soils. We hear a

573

00:18:43,520 --> 00:18:47,440

lot about carbon

574

00:18:44,720 --> 00:18:50,400

sequestration and the need to get to

575

00:18:47,440 --> 00:18:53,440

the position of net zero, or even better.

576

00:18:50,400 --> 00:18:54,720

Tell us a bit about your thinking

577

00:18:53,440 --> 00:18:56,799

around that and

578

00:18:54,720 --> 00:18:58,960

how potentially excited are you

579

00:18:56,799 --> 00:18:59,840

by this system, not only being good for

580

00:18:58,960 --> 00:19:01,840

the business

581

00:18:59,840 --> 00:19:03,919

and its profitability, but good for the

582

00:19:01,840 --> 00:19:05,440

environment as well?

583

00:19:03,919 --> 00:19:08,000

Yes, definitely. It's something

584

00:19:05,440 --> 00:19:09,440

that's very important to me and

585

00:19:08,000 --> 00:19:10,480

something I strongly believe should be

586

00:19:09,440 --> 00:19:14,480

important to

587

00:19:10,480 --> 00:19:17,360

all farmers.

588

00:19:14,480 --> 00:19:17,600

Previous trials have been done in

589

00:19:17,360 --> 00:19:20,480

590

00:19:17,600 --> 00:19:22,000

a university, and I'm not sure exactly

591

00:19:20,480 --> 00:19:25,440

where in England it is

592

00:19:22,000 --> 00:19:26,559

but the soil

593

00:19:25,440 --> 00:19:29,760

organic matter can

594

00:19:26,559 --> 00:19:31,360

increase by 0.3%. We're very

595

00:19:29,760 --> 00:19:33,840

early days in

596

00:19:31,360 --> 00:19:34,400

the trial here, but we've

597

00:19:33,840 --> 00:19:36,799

taken

598

00:19:34,400 --> 00:19:38,559

different soil samples at different

599

00:19:36,799 --> 00:19:40,160

depths within the fields.

600

00:19:38,559 --> 00:19:41,840

We've got a control field that I've set

601

00:19:40,160 --> 00:19:45,280

stocked and then

602

00:19:41,840 --> 00:19:48,400

taking more samples from

603

00:19:45,280 --> 00:19:50,480

an area that is within the rotation.

604

00:19:48,400 --> 00:19:53,600

Hopefully, towards the end of my

605

00:19:50,480 --> 00:19:57,120

10 years as a demonstration farm,

606

00:19:53,600 --> 00:20:00,240

I will be able to demonstrate

607

00:19:57,120 --> 00:20:02,000

that we are able

608

00:20:00,240 --> 00:20:03,280

to increase the soil organic matter

609

00:20:02,000 --> 00:20:05,120

significantly.

610

00:20:03,280 --> 00:20:06,559

That is something that is very

611

00:20:05,120 --> 00:20:07,840

exciting. It's very positive and

612

00:20:06,559 --> 00:20:10,240

something that

613

00:20:07,840 --> 00:20:11,120

I think is going to be very important to

614

00:20:10,240 --> 00:20:13,840

us as

615

00:20:11,120 --> 00:20:16,159

people who are producing red meat in the

616

00:20:13,840 --> 00:20:17,919

future. I think gone are the days where

617

00:20:16,159 --> 00:20:20,320

it's a matter of producing lamb,

618

00:20:17,919 --> 00:20:22,240

steer or beef and going to

619

00:20:20,320 --> 00:20:24,640

market and selling it.

620

00:20:22,240 --> 00:20:27,360

We as farmers need to be a

621

00:20:24,640 --> 00:20:29,440

lot more involved in telling a story

622

00:20:27,360 --> 00:20:30,400

with what we're selling. We're

623

00:20:29,440 --> 00:20:32,480

expected to

624

00:20:30,400 --> 00:20:34,400

sell our red

625

00:20:32,480 --> 00:20:36,559

meat to people and I think they've got a

626

00:20:34,400 --> 00:20:38,400

right to know the history of

627

00:20:36,559 --> 00:20:39,840

what they're eating, and

628

00:20:38,400 --> 00:20:41,760

629

00:20:39,840 --> 00:20:43,360

how that animal has been reared, what

630

00:20:41,760 --> 00:20:45,280

the story of the farm is.

631

00:20:43,360 --> 00:20:47,039

We've got a good story to tell

632

00:20:45,280 --> 00:20:48,559

633

00:20:47,039 --> 00:20:50,559

634

00:20:48,559 --> 00:20:51,600

in UK red meat production.

635

00:20:50,559 --> 00:20:52,320

We've got an excellent story and I

636

00:20:51,600 --> 00:20:53,760

think that

637

00:20:52,320 --> 00:20:56,640

can only be positive thing, to

638

00:20:53,760 --> 00:20:59,200

tell a story, even on the packaging

639

00:20:56,640 --> 00:21:00,720

of what we're selling.

640

00:20:59,200 --> 00:21:02,159

We're expecting people to give

641

00:21:00,720 --> 00:21:04,000

their money for what we're producing

642

00:21:02,159 --> 00:21:07,360

and I think we should supply data with it.

643

00:21:04,000 --> 00:21:09,360

Definitely. Yes, and I guess one of the

644

00:21:07,360 --> 00:21:12,559

positives to come out of COVID-19

645

00:21:09,360 --> 00:21:15,280

is the surge in

646

00:21:12,559 --> 00:21:16,640

consumer interest, public interest in

647

00:21:15,280 --> 00:21:19,760

food provenance

648

00:21:16,640 --> 00:21:21,200

and local food supply chains.

649

00:21:19,760 --> 00:21:22,000

What are your thoughts about

650

00:21:21,200 --> 00:21:24,640

the recent

651

00:21:22,000 --> 00:21:26,159

trade agreement with Australia?

652

00:21:24,640 --> 00:21:28,240

A lot of attention has

653

00:21:26,159 --> 00:21:30,320

been given to this in the press, but as a red

654

00:21:28,240 --> 00:21:33,760

meat producer, lamb

655

00:21:30,320 --> 00:21:34,480

producer, do you feel that it’s going

656

00:21:33,760 --> 00:21:37,280

to

657

00:21:34,480 --> 00:21:39,200

be a big competition to you in the

658

00:21:37,280 --> 00:21:41,200

future, that it’s potentially going to put

659

00:21:39,200 --> 00:21:43,440

downward pressure on prices, or

660

00:21:41,200 --> 00:21:45,440

do you think that it's not going to be

661

00:21:43,440 --> 00:21:47,200

of significant volumes to have an

662

00:21:45,440 --> 00:21:50,880

impact?

663

00:21:47,200 --> 00:21:53,120

As things are today,

664

00:21:50,880 --> 00:21:54,080

personally, I don't think

665

00:21:53,120 --> 00:21:56,400

it's going to have

666

00:21:54,080 --> 00:21:57,440

an immediate impact because of the

667

00:21:56,400 --> 00:22:00,559

prices that

668

00:21:57,440 --> 00:22:01,919

red meat is making in Australia.

669

00:22:00,559 --> 00:22:05,280

I'm quite confident, without sounding

670

00:22:01,919 --> 00:22:06,640

sexist, but the

671

00:22:05,280 --> 00:22:08,400

housewife or

672

00:22:06,640 --> 00:22:09,679

whoever does the shopping

673

00:22:08,400 --> 00:22:11,919

or goes to the supermarket or the

674

00:22:09,679 --> 00:22:12,400

butcher is going to stick with

675

00:22:11,919 --> 00:22:14,559

and

676

00:22:12,400 --> 00:22:15,520

continue to support the British produce

677

00:22:14,559 --> 00:22:18,720

because

678

00:22:15,520 --> 00:22:22,159

of traceability and

679

00:22:18,720 --> 00:22:24,240

knowing the carbon footprint of

680

00:22:22,159 --> 00:22:25,360

what they're buying. I do worry a

681

00:22:24,240 --> 00:22:28,480

bit about

682

00:22:25,360 --> 00:22:30,480

the wholesalers. I

683

00:22:28,480 --> 00:22:31,679

believe that when they're supplying to

684

00:22:30,480 --> 00:22:34,720

different events and

685

00:22:31,679 --> 00:22:36,080

different restaurants,

686

00:22:34,720 --> 00:22:37,760

their margins are so tight

687

00:22:36,080 --> 00:22:40,080

these days that they are going to

688

00:22:37,760 --> 00:22:41,440

opt for the cheapest product. But I

689

00:22:40,080 --> 00:22:45,840

strongly believe that

690

00:22:41,440 --> 00:22:48,240

the whole market

691

00:22:45,840 --> 00:22:49,440

will stay strong which

692

00:22:48,240 --> 00:22:51,760

emphasises

693

00:22:49,440 --> 00:22:53,520

what I said earlier, that we need to

694

00:22:51,760 --> 00:22:54,080

offer information to the people buying our

695

00:22:53,520 --> 00:22:57,760

product,

696

00:22:54,080 --> 00:22:59,200

the story of our produce,

697

00:22:57,760 --> 00:23:00,880

the carbon footprint of the

698

00:22:59,200 --> 00:23:02,400

farm.

699

00:23:00,880 --> 00:23:04,400

I think the assurance schemes are going

700

00:23:02,400 --> 00:23:07,760

to be more important

701

00:23:04,400 --> 00:23:09,120

than ever. We do tell

702

00:23:07,760 --> 00:23:11,440

the customer

703

00:23:09,120 --> 00:23:12,880

a good story and we sell a good story

704

00:23:11,440 --> 00:23:14,559

about our produce and we do have a good

705

00:23:12,880 --> 00:23:17,039

story to tell.

706

00:23:14,559 --> 00:23:18,880

And talking about assurance, that's

707

00:23:17,039 --> 00:23:21,520

the other work you do

708

00:23:18,880 --> 00:23:23,120

off farm. On top of all

709

00:23:21,520 --> 00:23:25,200

the things you're doing at Pendre, you

710

00:23:23,120 --> 00:23:27,760

still manage to squeeze in three days

711

00:23:25,200 --> 00:23:29,280

a week with the farm assurance work. How

712

00:23:27,760 --> 00:23:32,559

does the two balance together?

713

00:23:29,280 --> 00:23:34,000

Do they work well? Yes, I find it

714

00:23:32,559 --> 00:23:36,000

very interesting.

715

00:23:34,000 --> 00:23:37,039

I'm predominantly office based,

716

00:23:36,000 --> 00:23:38,880

working with the

717

00:23:37,039 --> 00:23:40,880

assessors that

718

00:23:38,880 --> 00:23:43,679

come out to your farm.

719

00:23:40,880 --> 00:23:44,400

I do go out on farms sometimes to

720

00:23:43,679 --> 00:23:46,320

shadow

721

00:23:44,400 --> 00:23:48,240

some of the assessors and to

722

00:23:46,320 --> 00:23:51,360

visit some farms myself, and

723

00:23:48,240 --> 00:23:53,279

yes, I really enjoy

724

00:23:51,360 --> 00:23:55,279

the job and really enjoy going out to

725

00:23:53,279 --> 00:23:57,679

see different systems,

726

00:23:55,279 --> 00:23:58,720

and going back to what I've

727

00:23:57,679 --> 00:24:01,120

already said,

728

00:23:58,720 --> 00:24:02,640

we

729

00:24:01,120 --> 00:24:04,640

have got some of the

730

00:24:02,640 --> 00:24:05,840

best farmers in the world. We

731

00:24:04,640 --> 00:24:09,039

definitely have,

732

00:24:05,840 --> 00:24:11,200

and I see it on a daily basis. The

733

00:24:09,039 --> 00:24:12,880

quality of the farms that I see

734

00:24:11,200 --> 00:24:14,400

on a daily basis are absolutely

735

00:24:12,880 --> 00:24:16,400

outstanding, and

736

00:24:14,400 --> 00:24:17,760

this is being shouted in

737

00:24:16,400 --> 00:24:18,799

places that we

738

00:24:17,760 --> 00:24:20,960

do have the best

739

00:24:18,799 --> 00:24:22,480

farmers here in Wales, but

740

00:24:20,960 --> 00:24:23,679

these days, I think we've got to put

741

00:24:22,480 --> 00:24:24,240

something with a little bit of data

742

00:24:23,679 --> 00:24:26,000

showing

743

00:24:24,240 --> 00:24:27,440

why. There’s no point shouting that

744

00:24:26,000 --> 00:24:29,679

we are the best farmers in world.

745

00:24:27,440 --> 00:24:31,440

People want

746

00:24:29,679 --> 00:24:32,720

information and want to know why we say that we're the

747

00:24:31,440 --> 00:24:34,640

best farmers in the world.

748

00:24:32,720 --> 00:24:36,559

But the job itself, it's

749

00:24:34,640 --> 00:24:39,120

really interesting. I really enjoy it.

750

00:24:36,559 --> 00:24:40,159

I work with a great team and as I said,

751

00:24:39,120 --> 00:24:42,480

there are great farmers

752

00:24:40,159 --> 00:24:43,279

out there, and having

753

00:24:42,480 --> 00:24:46,320

the balance,

754

00:24:43,279 --> 00:24:47,679

the security of a job. On a

755

00:24:46,320 --> 00:24:49,120

Sunday night, I'm looking forward to

756

00:24:47,679 --> 00:24:50,640

going into work on a Monday morning,

757

00:24:49,120 --> 00:24:52,720

and by Wednesday night then, I'm

758

00:24:50,640 --> 00:24:53,600

looking forward to either going to my

759

00:24:52,720 --> 00:24:55,600

father's farm or

760

00:24:53,600 --> 00:24:56,960

get work done here. We all

761

00:24:55,600 --> 00:24:59,279

plan out what we need to do

762

00:24:56,960 --> 00:25:00,159

from Thursday to Sunday and then

763

00:24:59,279 --> 00:25:03,039

764

00:25:00,159 --> 00:25:04,559

I feel as if I'm always refreshed for

765

00:25:03,039 --> 00:25:06,880

both jobs.

766

00:25:04,559 --> 00:25:07,919

So as things are at the moment,

767

00:25:06,880 --> 00:25:10,000

it's

768

00:25:07,919 --> 00:25:11,120

a great balance to have

769

00:25:10,000 --> 00:25:14,000

both and

770

00:25:11,120 --> 00:25:15,760

very educational as well with the

771

00:25:14,000 --> 00:25:17,120

different farmers that I see.

772

00:25:15,760 --> 00:25:19,039

I'm sure it's a healthy thing as well,

773

00:25:17,120 --> 00:25:20,480

isn't it? Farming can be a lonely

774

00:25:19,039 --> 00:25:22,159

profession, so it's important to take

775

00:25:20,480 --> 00:25:22,720

yourself away from the farm from time to

776

00:25:22,159 --> 00:25:24,640

time,

777

00:25:22,720 --> 00:25:25,919

see others, speak to other people and

778

00:25:24,640 --> 00:25:27,440

that's where you pick up

779

00:25:25,919 --> 00:25:30,159

some new ideas and things you can

780

00:25:27,440 --> 00:25:33,120

introduce at Pendre, and indeed,

781

00:25:30,159 --> 00:25:34,240

on your father's holding in Brynperffaith

782

00:25:33,120 --> 00:25:36,400

as well. But

783

00:25:34,240 --> 00:25:37,279

what does the future hold now for you as

784

00:25:36,400 --> 00:25:39,840

785

00:25:37,279 --> 00:25:41,279

a family farming unit? Are

786

00:25:39,840 --> 00:25:42,640

you optimistic for the future? There are

787

00:25:41,279 --> 00:25:44,240

many changes happening. We've touched

788

00:25:42,640 --> 00:25:45,600

upon the changes to trading

789

00:25:44,240 --> 00:25:47,360

relationships and obviously,

790

00:25:45,600 --> 00:25:49,679

there are going to be mass changes to the

791

00:25:47,360 --> 00:25:51,360

future of support schemes going forward.

792

00:25:49,679 --> 00:25:53,600

You'll have your own aspirations and

793

00:25:51,360 --> 00:25:55,520

goals for expansion as well.

794

00:25:53,600 --> 00:25:57,200

Are you excited about the next 10 years

795

00:25:55,520 --> 00:25:59,679

in Welsh farming?

796

00:25:57,200 --> 00:26:01,520

Yes, tremendously excited.

797

00:25:59,679 --> 00:26:03,440

For the future, for me myself, I

798

00:26:01,520 --> 00:26:07,120

would like to expand.

799

00:26:03,440 --> 00:26:08,960

The parcels of land that

800

00:26:07,120 --> 00:26:11,840

I have with Pendre are a bit

801

00:26:08,960 --> 00:26:13,039

far away. I would like to have land that is a

802

00:26:11,840 --> 00:26:16,159

bit closer, that I wasn't

803

00:26:13,039 --> 00:26:18,000

quite on the road so much,

804

00:26:16,159 --> 00:26:19,520

and I think the changes that are

805

00:26:18,000 --> 00:26:22,640

on the horizon, especially with the

806

00:26:19,520 --> 00:26:24,000

Single Farm Payment,

807

00:26:22,640 --> 00:26:25,760

from a personal perspective, are going to

808

00:26:24,000 --> 00:26:29,039

be very positive for me, that's my

809

00:26:25,760 --> 00:26:29,679

thought. I would like to think

810

00:26:29,039 --> 00:26:31,840

that

811

00:26:29,679 --> 00:26:32,880

people with my sort of mindset or

812

00:26:31,840 --> 00:26:35,039

my

813

00:26:32,880 --> 00:26:36,720

aspirations are going to benefit from

814

00:26:35,039 --> 00:26:37,840

the changes with the Single Farm Payment. I don't

815

00:26:36,720 --> 00:26:40,480

think the current system

816

00:26:37,840 --> 00:26:41,840

is fit for purpose at all where farmers

817

00:26:40,480 --> 00:26:44,159

receive a lump sum

818

00:26:41,840 --> 00:26:45,360

landing on their doorstep every December.

819

00:26:44,159 --> 00:26:47,200

I don't think that benefits

820

00:26:45,360 --> 00:26:48,880

anybody. It's great for the

821

00:26:47,200 --> 00:26:49,279

farmers when they recede, but

822

00:26:48,880 --> 00:26:51,600

823

00:26:49,279 --> 00:26:54,159

for younger

824

00:26:51,600 --> 00:26:56,559

generations coming into farming and for

825

00:26:54,159 --> 00:26:57,520

farming methods, it's not

826

00:26:56,559 --> 00:26:59,520

doing any favors

827

00:26:57,520 --> 00:27:00,880

to anybody long term. Good luck to the

828

00:26:59,520 --> 00:27:04,559

people who are receiving

829

00:27:00,880 --> 00:27:06,240

those large lump sums, but I see a lot

830

00:27:04,559 --> 00:27:09,120

more opportunities coming for

831

00:27:06,240 --> 00:27:10,559

someone like me, once

832

00:27:09,120 --> 00:27:13,679

the Single Farm Payment

833

00:27:10,559 --> 00:27:15,760

finishes and

834

00:27:13,679 --> 00:27:16,960

different structures are

835

00:27:15,760 --> 00:27:20,320

put in place.

836

00:27:16,960 --> 00:27:22,720

I'm very optimistic.

837

00:27:20,320 --> 00:27:23,919

As we know, there's a huge growth in

838

00:27:22,720 --> 00:27:25,760

population

839

00:27:23,919 --> 00:27:28,000

and they all need feeding.

840

00:27:25,760 --> 00:27:31,440

There is a demand for

841

00:27:28,000 --> 00:27:34,480

high quality protein out there

842

00:27:31,440 --> 00:27:38,159

and I'm quite excited to be

843

00:27:34,480 --> 00:27:38,799

part of the chain that’s supplying

844

00:27:38,159 --> 00:27:41,360

that.

845

00:27:38,799 --> 00:27:43,039

Definitely. I'm hoping

846

00:27:41,360 --> 00:27:45,279

that

847

00:27:43,039 --> 00:27:47,600

it's going to be easier for me to

848

00:27:45,279 --> 00:27:49,279

expand my current business

849

00:27:47,600 --> 00:27:51,440

when the Single Farm Payment

850

00:27:49,279 --> 00:27:52,880

disappears. And it’s refreshing to

851

00:27:51,440 --> 00:27:54,880

hear that optimism because

852

00:27:52,880 --> 00:27:57,120

it can be very easy for us to get

853

00:27:54,880 --> 00:27:59,440

negative or down beat about change, but

854

00:27:57,120 --> 00:28:01,360

actually looking at it as a positive is

855

00:27:59,440 --> 00:28:02,799

really good and refreshing to hear,

856

00:28:01,360 --> 00:28:04,399

and no doubt those opportunities will

857

00:28:02,799 --> 00:28:06,480

help safeguard

858

00:28:04,399 --> 00:28:08,080

the family farm for future generations.

859

00:28:06,480 --> 00:28:10,000

And I know you've got

860

00:28:08,080 --> 00:28:11,600

a wonderful family with young children

861

00:28:10,000 --> 00:28:13,520

who perhaps one day

862

00:28:11,600 --> 00:28:15,440

will want to follow in your footsteps,

863

00:28:13,520 --> 00:28:16,240

and get involved with farming in some

864

00:28:15,440 --> 00:28:18,480

form another

865

00:28:16,240 --> 00:28:20,000

themselves. But before we draw this

866

00:28:18,480 --> 00:28:22,000

podcast to a close,

867

00:28:20,000 --> 00:28:24,159

Tom, this is a question we're asking

868

00:28:22,000 --> 00:28:26,640

everybody this year, and that is

869

00:28:24,159 --> 00:28:28,240

how would you describe a successful

870

00:28:26,640 --> 00:28:29,440

farmer? Now, you're someone who meets a

871

00:28:28,240 --> 00:28:31,200

lot of farmers

872

00:28:29,440 --> 00:28:33,679

in your work, both professionally in the

873

00:28:31,200 --> 00:28:36,799

office and also practically in the field.

874

00:28:33,679 --> 00:28:39,039

How would you describe to me a

875

00:28:36,799 --> 00:28:41,120

successful farmer? If you had to provide

876

00:28:39,039 --> 00:28:42,799

a definition or a description of one,

877

00:28:41,120 --> 00:28:44,320

what would it be?

878

00:28:42,799 --> 00:28:45,840

Well, I'm quite fortunate in the

879

00:28:44,320 --> 00:28:46,720

work that I do. As I said earlier,

880

00:28:45,840 --> 00:28:49,200

I do

881

00:28:46,720 --> 00:28:49,760

meet a lot of farmers and I am seeing a

882

00:28:49,200 --> 00:28:53,600

trend

883

00:28:49,760 --> 00:28:55,840

on farms. I think

884

00:28:53,600 --> 00:28:57,039

one of the most successful farmers that

885

00:28:55,840 --> 00:28:59,520

I see are the ones that

886

00:28:57,039 --> 00:29:02,080

are adaptable and willing to change.

887

00:28:59,520 --> 00:29:04,559

We're farming in a changing

888

00:29:02,080 --> 00:29:06,159

climate. There's

889

00:29:04,559 --> 00:29:07,279

different systems coming available,

890

00:29:06,159 --> 00:29:10,480

different

891

00:29:07,279 --> 00:29:13,840

methods to doing stuff. I see those

892

00:29:10,480 --> 00:29:16,159

open-minded farmers

893

00:29:13,840 --> 00:29:17,440

who are willing to adapt and change

894

00:29:16,159 --> 00:29:19,520

their system and

895

00:29:17,440 --> 00:29:21,039

bring new people into their business, and they are

896

00:29:19,520 --> 00:29:23,360

the most successful ones.

897

00:29:21,039 --> 00:29:24,399

To put a flip side, the least

898

00:29:23,360 --> 00:29:27,039

successful

899

00:29:24,399 --> 00:29:28,480

ones that I see in my farming

900

00:29:27,039 --> 00:29:30,720

career and in my work

901

00:29:28,480 --> 00:29:32,320

time are the ones who are

902

00:29:30,720 --> 00:29:32,880

still trying to battle on the same way

903

00:29:32,320 --> 00:29:34,399

as they were

904

00:29:32,880 --> 00:29:37,360

20 years ago, and hoping for the same

905

00:29:34,399 --> 00:29:37,679

results. To me, it’s the ones who

906

00:29:37,360 --> 00:29:39,520

are

907

00:29:37,679 --> 00:29:40,880

willing to change and the ones who enjoy

908

00:29:39,520 --> 00:29:42,799

what they're doing. When you wake up in

909

00:29:40,880 --> 00:29:44,240

the morning and look forward to certain

910

00:29:42,799 --> 00:29:45,600

tasks ahead of you, and

911

00:29:44,240 --> 00:29:48,000

look forward to what you could do in

912

00:29:45,600 --> 00:29:49,919

that day,

913

00:29:48,000 --> 00:29:51,279

work is so much easier when you

914

00:29:49,919 --> 00:29:52,559

enjoy it. When you get up in the

915

00:29:51,279 --> 00:29:54,000

morning and you're looking forward

916

00:29:52,559 --> 00:29:55,600

to doing something that you really love

917

00:29:54,000 --> 00:29:58,000

doing, then

918

00:29:55,600 --> 00:29:59,600

it's almost that you

919

00:29:58,000 --> 00:30:00,880

don't see it quite as work. It's just

920

00:29:59,600 --> 00:30:01,520

something that you are really

921

00:30:00,880 --> 00:30:05,039

passionate about

922

00:30:01,520 --> 00:30:06,960

and want to do. That's

923

00:30:05,039 --> 00:30:08,080

my answer. The most successful farmers that

924

00:30:06,960 --> 00:30:10,240

I see are the ones who

925

00:30:08,080 --> 00:30:11,600

are willing to adapt to any changes

926

00:30:10,240 --> 00:30:13,039

within the industry.

927

00:30:11,600 --> 00:30:14,399

I think that's a fantastic

928

00:30:13,039 --> 00:30:15,919

answer, Tom, and I agree

929

00:30:14,399 --> 00:30:17,679

wholeheartedly with you there.

930

00:30:15,919 --> 00:30:20,159

In terms of having that ability to see

931

00:30:17,679 --> 00:30:22,080

the bigger picture, having an open mind

932

00:30:20,159 --> 00:30:23,360

and enjoying what you do. It's a very

933

00:30:22,080 --> 00:30:25,840

important message there.

934

00:30:23,360 --> 00:30:27,360

Well, Tom, thank you ever so

935

00:30:25,840 --> 00:30:28,960

much for joining us on

936

00:30:27,360 --> 00:30:30,640

today's podcast. It's been brilliant to

937

00:30:28,960 --> 00:30:32,320

learn a bit more about Pendre, the work

938

00:30:30,640 --> 00:30:34,559

you've been doing as a Farming Connect

939

00:30:32,320 --> 00:30:36,000

demonstration site, and indeed your

940

00:30:34,559 --> 00:30:39,919

outlook for the future is

941

00:30:36,000 --> 00:30:39,919

a very positive and optimistic one.

942

00:30:43,679 --> 00:30:47,279

If you would like more information about

943

00:30:45,440 --> 00:30:47,919

the support available through Farming

944

00:30:47,279 --> 00:30:49,760

Connect,

945

00:30:47,919 --> 00:30:51,520

then please contact your local

946

00:30:49,760 --> 00:30:52,159

development officer or the Service

947

00:30:51,520 --> 00:30:55,120

Centre

948

00:30:52,159 --> 00:30:55,600

on 08456 000 813.

949

00:30:55,120 --> 00:30:58,480

950

00:30:55,600 --> 00:31:00,640

And there we are. We've reached

951

00:30:58,480 --> 00:31:02,399

the end of yet another episode.

952

00:31:00,640 --> 00:31:04,159

We'll be back in two weeks with

953

00:31:02,399 --> 00:31:06,159

plenty more to talk about.

954

00:31:04,159 --> 00:31:08,640

In the meantime, don't forget to hit

955

00:31:06,159 --> 00:31:11,120

subscribe on whichever platform you use

956

00:31:08,640 --> 00:31:12,799

to keep notified of all new episodes of

957

00:31:11,120 --> 00:31:14,559

Ear to the Ground.

958

00:31:12,799 --> 00:31:16,480

On behalf of the team at Farming

959

00:31:14,559 --> 00:31:18,159

Connect and myself, Aled Jones,

960

00:31:16,480 --> 00:31:32,320

thank you for listening and goodbye for

961

00:31:18,159 --> 00:31:35,570

now.

962

00:31:32,320 --> 00:31:35,570

[Music]

963

00:31:38,159 --> 00:31:40,240