1

00:00:01,950 --> 00:00:10,400

[Music]

2

00:00:04,340 --> 00:00:12,799

[Music]

3

00:00:10,400 --> 00:00:15,360

Hello and welcome. You're listening to

4

00:00:12,799 --> 00:00:18,000

Ear to the Ground, a podcast brought to

5

00:00:15,360 --> 00:00:20,800

you by Farming Connect, supporting Welsh

6

00:00:18,000 --> 00:00:22,720

farmers to adapt and thrive.

7

00:00:20,800 --> 00:00:24,880

Recently, Jim and I had the

8

00:00:22,720 --> 00:00:27,199

opportunity to visit Llŷr Jones at

9

00:00:24,880 --> 00:00:29,439

Derwydd farm near Corwen.

10

00:00:27,199 --> 00:00:30,480

Entrepreneurship runs through Llŷr’s

11

00:00:29,439 --> 00:00:32,079

veins.

12

00:00:30,480 --> 00:00:34,239

He's one of those farmers who's not

13

00:00:32,079 --> 00:00:36,559

afraid of giving something a go, and in

14

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

this episode we hear about all the

15

00:00:36,559 --> 00:00:41,040

different enterprises that are taking

16

00:00:38,399 --> 00:00:43,520

place at Derwydd, including the extension

17

00:00:41,040 --> 00:00:46,000

to the egg business, setting up a wild

18

00:00:43,520 --> 00:00:48,480

camping site, his incredible trip to

19

00:00:46,000 --> 00:00:51,039

Ukraine recently, and how the Agri

20

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

Academy has played a key role in all his

21

00:00:51,039 --> 00:00:53,520

businesses.

22

00:00:51,600 --> 00:00:55,520

[Music]

23

00:00:53,520 --> 00:00:58,160

Right Llŷr, I think I’m going to start

24

00:00:55,520 --> 00:00:59,840

by asking you what’s a typical day for

25

00:00:58,160 --> 00:01:02,320

Llŷr Derwydd? I follow you on

26

00:00:59,840 --> 00:01:04,080

Twitter, I know you well, there's an awful

27

00:01:02,320 --> 00:01:06,799

lot going on on the farm, but

28

00:01:04,080 --> 00:01:07,840

what is a typical day for you?

29

00:01:06,799 --> 00:01:10,720

30

00:01:07,840 --> 00:01:12,479

There isn't one typical day to be fair -

31

00:01:10,720 --> 00:01:15,360

every day is different.

32

00:01:12,479 --> 00:01:18,799

I do like getting up quite early

33

00:01:15,360 --> 00:01:21,840

in the morning, about five or half five.

34

00:01:18,799 --> 00:01:23,920

It's quite nice to have that time,

35

00:01:21,840 --> 00:01:25,119

like me time where nobody is trying

36

00:01:23,920 --> 00:01:26,960

to get a hold of you and you can do a

37

00:01:25,119 --> 00:01:29,200

bit of

38

00:01:26,960 --> 00:01:31,200

emails and things. My daughter,

39

00:01:29,200 --> 00:01:33,040

Dwynwen,

40

00:01:31,200 --> 00:01:34,640

she likes to get up early as well. She’s up at

41

00:01:33,040 --> 00:01:36,640

half five as well.

42

00:01:34,640 --> 00:01:38,400

I usually give them breakfast and

43

00:01:36,640 --> 00:01:40,640

then do some paperwork,

44

00:01:38,400 --> 00:01:42,720

and then who knows from there.

45

00:01:40,640 --> 00:01:44,560

You've got colleagues, staff,

46

00:01:42,720 --> 00:01:46,159

members, and they also start quite early as

47

00:01:44,560 --> 00:01:49,280

well.

48

00:01:46,159 --> 00:01:52,399

The egg unit, so

49

00:01:49,280 --> 00:01:53,600

Lyn and Menna, or whoever's working, they

50

00:01:52,399 --> 00:01:54,720

usually start at six o'clock in the

51

00:01:53,600 --> 00:01:56,399

morning.

52

00:01:54,720 --> 00:01:59,840

Rhodri

53

00:01:56,399 --> 00:02:01,439

starts at half five in the morning, and

54

00:01:59,840 --> 00:02:03,680

Vicky usually starts eight o'clock in

55

00:02:01,439 --> 00:02:05,200

the morning. Tell us a

56

00:02:03,680 --> 00:02:07,520

bit more about

57

00:02:05,200 --> 00:02:10,239

Derwydd farm itself. We

58

00:02:07,520 --> 00:02:11,840

are recording this just nearby the new

59

00:02:10,239 --> 00:02:14,239

egg unit you've built, and we'll talk a bit

60

00:02:11,840 --> 00:02:16,400

more about that in a moment, but

61

00:02:14,239 --> 00:02:19,360

the farm itself, there’s about 300 acres

62

00:02:16,400 --> 00:02:23,280

here on this block? Yes, and

63

00:02:19,360 --> 00:02:26,800

then we have 1,000 acres in Llandegla,

64

00:02:23,280 --> 00:02:26,800

which is a moorland,

65

00:02:27,760 --> 00:02:32,480

heather and

66

00:02:29,360 --> 00:02:33,760

bracken.

67

00:02:32,480 --> 00:02:36,000

We have

68

00:02:33,760 --> 00:02:37,200

nearly another 300 acres in Flintshire that we

69

00:02:36,000 --> 00:02:38,160

rent.

70

00:02:37,200 --> 00:02:42,640

What are all the different

71

00:02:38,160 --> 00:02:42,640

enterprises, because I lose count

72

00:02:42,720 --> 00:02:45,200

of all the different things that are going on

73

00:02:44,160 --> 00:02:46,510

here?

74

00:02:45,200 --> 00:02:47,840

75

00:02:46,510 --> 00:02:50,959

76

00:02:47,840 --> 00:02:52,239

Predominantly, I inherited a

77

00:02:50,959 --> 00:02:54,640

sheep farm,

78

00:02:52,239 --> 00:02:58,640

and then we've got

79

00:02:54,640 --> 00:03:01,120

just under 1,000 ewes for lambing;

80

00:02:58,640 --> 00:03:03,680

there's 250

81

00:03:01,120 --> 00:03:05,599

dairy heifers,

82

00:03:03,680 --> 00:03:08,560

32,000

83

00:03:05,599 --> 00:03:11,040

free-range egg farm,

84

00:03:08,560 --> 00:03:12,319

and we've also got the renewables, the hydro,

85

00:03:11,040 --> 00:03:15,280

solar,

86

00:03:12,319 --> 00:03:17,680

ground source and air source.

87

00:03:15,280 --> 00:03:18,959

We have a holiday home,

88

00:03:17,680 --> 00:03:22,319

a campsite,

89

00:03:18,959 --> 00:03:22,319

and we also do

90

00:03:23,680 --> 00:03:27,360

like a fallen stock

91

00:03:25,440 --> 00:03:29,200

collection centre where the

92

00:03:27,360 --> 00:03:30,560

fallen stock go to produce

93

00:03:29,200 --> 00:03:35,440

green energy,

94

00:03:30,560 --> 00:03:37,519

and I’m also a part owner of an

95

00:03:35,440 --> 00:03:38,959

equine fertility,

96

00:03:37,519 --> 00:03:40,080

97

00:03:38,959 --> 00:03:41,840

98

00:03:40,080 --> 00:03:44,080

a veterinary practice that my

99

00:03:41,840 --> 00:03:45,280

wife owns.

100

00:03:44,080 --> 00:03:47,599

You've got quite a range of

101

00:03:45,280 --> 00:03:50,080

businesses, and is that part of the plan,

102

00:03:47,599 --> 00:03:51,519

that you spread the risk,

103

00:03:50,080 --> 00:03:55,040

pardon the pun, and that not all eggs are in one

104

00:03:51,519 --> 00:03:58,239

basket? Yes, that's right.

105

00:03:55,040 --> 00:03:59,439

Yes, definitely.

106

00:03:58,239 --> 00:04:01,200

I think

107

00:03:59,439 --> 00:04:03,280

my

108

00:04:01,200 --> 00:04:04,400

main thing in all the

109

00:04:03,280 --> 00:04:06,319

businesses

110

00:04:04,400 --> 00:04:08,000

is that I’m not involved in it,

111

00:04:06,319 --> 00:04:10,480

because I found

112

00:04:08,000 --> 00:04:12,640

that

113

00:04:10,480 --> 00:04:14,879

any business that I was in,

114

00:04:12,640 --> 00:04:16,959

I was always the weakest link. If I

115

00:04:14,879 --> 00:04:19,199

can take myself out of it,

116

00:04:16,959 --> 00:04:21,199

it runs far better,

117

00:04:19,199 --> 00:04:23,759

and you just find the

118

00:04:21,199 --> 00:04:26,000

right person for the right job and

119

00:04:23,759 --> 00:04:27,360

you give them that responsibility.

120

00:04:26,000 --> 00:04:29,040

121

00:04:27,360 --> 00:04:30,000

Every business has its own bank

122

00:04:29,040 --> 00:04:32,960

account,

123

00:04:30,000 --> 00:04:35,280

so we can make sure that it all

124

00:04:32,960 --> 00:04:36,880

works, and if it doesn't work,

125

00:04:35,280 --> 00:04:38,080

then we can hone in on the

126

00:04:36,880 --> 00:04:39,759

problems. That's a really good

127

00:04:38,080 --> 00:04:41,520

point because very often farms will

128

00:04:39,759 --> 00:04:43,360

diversify, but it all goes through the

129

00:04:41,520 --> 00:04:44,960

same accounts, and it's very

130

00:04:43,360 --> 00:04:46,160

difficult then to understand whether

131

00:04:44,960 --> 00:04:48,400

that aspect of the business is

132

00:04:46,160 --> 00:04:50,400

profitable or not because the costs are

133

00:04:48,400 --> 00:04:53,759

swallowed up and it gets lost in

134

00:04:50,400 --> 00:04:54,639

the accounts, doesn't it?

135

00:04:53,759 --> 00:04:56,160

136

00:04:54,639 --> 00:04:58,000

All the

137

00:04:56,160 --> 00:05:00,000

businesses have their own separate bank

138

00:04:58,000 --> 00:05:01,039

accounts, and only one

139

00:05:00,000 --> 00:05:03,680

140

00:05:01,039 --> 00:05:04,320

has loans or mortgages on

141

00:05:03,680 --> 00:05:06,639

it.

142

00:05:04,320 --> 00:05:08,720

They all feed into that one,

143

00:05:06,639 --> 00:05:10,400

and by doing that

144

00:05:08,720 --> 00:05:13,440

we can make sure that everything

145

00:05:10,400 --> 00:05:15,280

is positive. Also,

146

00:05:13,440 --> 00:05:16,720

the other thing that’s pretty good,

147

00:05:15,280 --> 00:05:18,560

sometimes the sheep and beef

148

00:05:16,720 --> 00:05:20,320

gets a bit tight, so we can just put

149

00:05:18,560 --> 00:05:21,919

money into that and it works the

150

00:05:20,320 --> 00:05:23,680

other way around. The businesses

151

00:05:21,919 --> 00:05:26,400

help to compensate each other when they

152

00:05:23,680 --> 00:05:28,240

need to. Only when they need to.

153

00:05:26,400 --> 00:05:30,720

When you get a business idea, and I’m

154

00:05:28,240 --> 00:05:32,320

sure your brain is buzzing with

155

00:05:30,720 --> 00:05:33,840

ideas all the time,

156

00:05:32,320 --> 00:05:36,479

is the key consideration, as you

157

00:05:33,840 --> 00:05:38,960

mentioned earlier, “can this business

158

00:05:36,479 --> 00:05:40,560

manage without me?” is almost the first

159

00:05:38,960 --> 00:05:42,000

question you'll ask before you dive

160

00:05:40,560 --> 00:05:44,000

yourself into it? 100%.

161

00:05:42,000 --> 00:05:44,960

It has to run without me

162

00:05:44,000 --> 00:05:46,240

being there.

163

00:05:44,960 --> 00:05:47,919

164

00:05:46,240 --> 00:05:49,360

165

00:05:47,919 --> 00:05:50,880

166

00:05:49,360 --> 00:05:53,600

167

00:05:50,880 --> 00:05:56,319

I actually get bored of repetitive work.

168

00:05:53,600 --> 00:05:58,720

I’m terrible for

169

00:05:56,319 --> 00:06:01,440

that, but I enjoy

170

00:05:58,720 --> 00:06:03,360

setting things up and

171

00:06:01,440 --> 00:06:05,360

allowing them to flourish

172

00:06:03,360 --> 00:06:07,280

from there. Out of all the different

173

00:06:05,360 --> 00:06:08,560

businesses you're running, which is your

174

00:06:07,280 --> 00:06:11,600

favourite?

175

00:06:08,560 --> 00:06:13,919

I think it's the renewables,

176

00:06:11,600 --> 00:06:16,639

the hydro. Now it's

177

00:06:13,919 --> 00:06:21,280

paid for, it's

178

00:06:16,639 --> 00:06:24,160

generating a good income, and

179

00:06:21,280 --> 00:06:26,000

it really has protected us, well

180

00:06:24,160 --> 00:06:27,280

the whole business

181

00:06:26,000 --> 00:06:29,919

182

00:06:27,280 --> 00:06:32,560

from the crisis in Ukraine,

183

00:06:29,919 --> 00:06:36,479

because we don't have an electric bill,

184

00:06:32,560 --> 00:06:40,080

and I understand that a lot of farmers’

185

00:06:36,479 --> 00:06:40,880

electricity

186

00:06:40,080 --> 00:06:43,840

bills have doubled,

187

00:06:40,880 --> 00:06:46,720

and that is a huge benefit for us. The

188

00:06:43,840 --> 00:06:48,720

biggest electricity user, I guess, is this

189

00:06:46,720 --> 00:06:50,639

poultry unit. The

190

00:06:48,720 --> 00:06:52,720

oil uses quite a

191

00:06:50,639 --> 00:06:54,000

bit.

192

00:06:52,720 --> 00:06:56,080

193

00:06:54,000 --> 00:06:59,520

If we were paying for electricity for here, I

194

00:06:56,080 --> 00:07:00,560

think it would be around £2,000-£2,500

195

00:06:59,520 --> 00:07:02,639

a

196

00:07:00,560 --> 00:07:04,319

month. It's a huge saving, isn’t it? It is a huge

197

00:07:02,639 --> 00:07:05,599

saving. And you managed to

198

00:07:04,319 --> 00:07:07,440

get into the renewables probably at the

199

00:07:05,599 --> 00:07:09,520

right time, because obviously some years

200

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

ago there were a lot of subsidies and

201

00:07:09,520 --> 00:07:13,599

tariffs, etc, and those have eroded

202

00:07:11,680 --> 00:07:16,560

over time, so you timed it probably quite

203

00:07:13,599 --> 00:07:19,199

right? Yes.

204

00:07:16,560 --> 00:07:22,400

In hindsight, obviously I would have

205

00:07:19,199 --> 00:07:23,919

put a massive wind turbine,

206

00:07:22,400 --> 00:07:26,639

but

207

00:07:23,919 --> 00:07:30,479

I decided to go down the

208

00:07:26,639 --> 00:07:33,280

hydro.

209

00:07:30,479 --> 00:07:35,440

I don't regret it because

210

00:07:33,280 --> 00:07:36,479

it really does help all the other

211

00:07:35,440 --> 00:07:39,840

businesses.

212

00:07:36,479 --> 00:07:42,800

We were lucky to go in

213

00:07:39,840 --> 00:07:45,039

when we did,

214

00:07:42,800 --> 00:07:47,199

but it was a gamble

215

00:07:45,039 --> 00:07:49,199

that thankfully has paid off.

216

00:07:47,199 --> 00:07:51,759

The latest investment is this

217

00:07:49,199 --> 00:07:55,599

poultry unit, the second 16,000 bird

218

00:07:51,759 --> 00:07:57,199

unit. You’ve got 32,000 birds in total. I

219

00:07:55,599 --> 00:07:59,599

remember seeing the pictures on Twitter

220

00:07:57,199 --> 00:08:01,199

and you were building the…

221

00:07:59,599 --> 00:08:02,800

I don't know what's the word, but the

222

00:08:01,199 --> 00:08:04,879

pressure was building as you were trying

223

00:08:02,800 --> 00:08:07,280

to get the physical building built in

224

00:08:04,879 --> 00:08:09,520

time for the birds to arrive. Was it

225

00:08:07,280 --> 00:08:10,400

quite a task to get it all in place?

226

00:08:09,520 --> 00:08:12,080

227

00:08:10,400 --> 00:08:14,560

I'll be honest with you, I was doing

228

00:08:12,080 --> 00:08:17,120

that just to sell the story.

229

00:08:14,560 --> 00:08:18,800

It worked!

230

00:08:17,120 --> 00:08:19,840

You're not the first one that’s said that

231

00:08:18,800 --> 00:08:21,199

to me because

232

00:08:19,840 --> 00:08:24,160

I think everybody else was a bit

233

00:08:21,199 --> 00:08:26,160

worried, but to be to be honest

234

00:08:24,160 --> 00:08:27,520

it was fine. Because it was my second

235

00:08:26,160 --> 00:08:29,120

shed,

236

00:08:27,520 --> 00:08:31,360

I knew

237

00:08:29,120 --> 00:08:32,479

how things were going to develop, and

238

00:08:31,360 --> 00:08:33,599

I knew

239

00:08:32,479 --> 00:08:35,120

that we didn't have to worry about the

240

00:08:33,599 --> 00:08:36,640

packing area because we could

241

00:08:35,120 --> 00:08:37,360

have the hens in.

242

00:08:36,640 --> 00:08:40,560

243

00:08:37,360 --> 00:08:42,719

I was able to put pressure on

244

00:08:40,560 --> 00:08:45,120

the right people at the right time.

245

00:08:42,719 --> 00:08:47,519

But we had COVID and

246

00:08:45,120 --> 00:08:48,160

we had workers off due to COVID,

247

00:08:47,519 --> 00:08:49,839

248

00:08:48,160 --> 00:08:52,560

which did put a little bit of pressure,

249

00:08:49,839 --> 00:08:54,399

but to be fair, everybody worked so hard

250

00:08:52,560 --> 00:08:56,640

and they got the job done.

251

00:08:54,399 --> 00:08:58,560

In terms of the cycle, how old are

252

00:08:56,640 --> 00:08:59,600

the birds when they come in, and when do they start

253

00:08:58,560 --> 00:09:02,000

laying

254

00:08:59,600 --> 00:09:04,800

and what's their cycle? They

255

00:09:02,000 --> 00:09:07,120

arrive here at 16 weeks

256

00:09:04,800 --> 00:09:07,120

old,

257

00:09:07,200 --> 00:09:11,600

and then they're on 10 hours of light.

258

00:09:09,519 --> 00:09:12,480

We feed them until they get

259

00:09:11,600 --> 00:09:15,200

to

260

00:09:12,480 --> 00:09:16,800

around about 1.5 kg, which is around

261

00:09:15,200 --> 00:09:18,320

the 20 weeks,

262

00:09:16,800 --> 00:09:20,560

and then once they arrive to that we

263

00:09:18,320 --> 00:09:22,000

give them 12 hours. Once they get 12

264

00:09:20,560 --> 00:09:23,360

hours of light, they will all start

265

00:09:22,000 --> 00:09:24,959

producing eggs.

266

00:09:23,360 --> 00:09:26,560

They'll be here then

267

00:09:24,959 --> 00:09:30,640

for 80

268

00:09:26,560 --> 00:09:33,040

weeks, and then

269

00:09:30,640 --> 00:09:34,560

once that life cycle is over,

270

00:09:33,040 --> 00:09:37,440

we clean out and start

271

00:09:34,560 --> 00:09:39,279

again. Between both sheds, how

272

00:09:37,440 --> 00:09:42,959

many eggs roughly would you produce in a

273

00:09:39,279 --> 00:09:46,320

year? With flock life, we'll

274

00:09:42,959 --> 00:09:48,320

probably get 10.5 million eggs;

275

00:09:46,320 --> 00:09:50,000

that's the plan. You pack them

276

00:09:48,320 --> 00:09:53,519

all yourselves, and these end up on the

277

00:09:50,000 --> 00:09:55,279

shelves in Tesco. Yes.

278

00:09:53,519 --> 00:09:57,920

They go from here

279

00:09:55,279 --> 00:09:59,519

to a packing area, a packing centre in

280

00:09:57,920 --> 00:10:00,560

Norfolk,

281

00:09:59,519 --> 00:10:01,920

which is on the other side of the

282

00:10:00,560 --> 00:10:05,120

country.

283

00:10:01,920 --> 00:10:06,800

We're on a

284

00:10:05,120 --> 00:10:08,880

cost of production contract with

285

00:10:06,800 --> 00:10:10,399

Tesco, and so we are protected with feed

286

00:10:08,880 --> 00:10:12,399

price. Especially given the current

287

00:10:10,399 --> 00:10:14,720

situation, because how much has feed

288

00:10:12,399 --> 00:10:16,560

increased due to the Ukraine crisis?

289

00:10:14,720 --> 00:10:19,200

290

00:10:16,560 --> 00:10:20,959

At the moment they've been brought forward, but

291

00:10:19,200 --> 00:10:23,519

we've gone up by

292

00:10:20,959 --> 00:10:24,399

£80 a day,

293

00:10:23,519 --> 00:10:27,920

294

00:10:24,399 --> 00:10:30,160

and then Tesco have

295

00:10:27,920 --> 00:10:32,240

protected us a little bit from that.

296

00:10:30,160 --> 00:10:34,160

Yes, it's pretty good,

297

00:10:32,240 --> 00:10:36,240

and it helps.

298

00:10:34,160 --> 00:10:37,680

299

00:10:36,240 --> 00:10:40,560

Sometimes

300

00:10:37,680 --> 00:10:42,480

the supermarket wins, and sometimes we win,

301

00:10:40,560 --> 00:10:44,959

but at the end of the day, as long as I’ve

302

00:10:42,480 --> 00:10:48,959

got enough to pay for the hens,

303

00:10:44,959 --> 00:10:50,320

the shed, the feed and labour,

304

00:10:48,959 --> 00:10:51,680

and if there's a little bit left for me in

305

00:10:50,320 --> 00:10:53,279

the end, then I’m happy. You've got a

306

00:10:51,680 --> 00:10:54,800

bit of business security as well,

307

00:10:53,279 --> 00:10:56,160

and you need that because you

308

00:10:54,800 --> 00:10:58,079

need to make sure the business

309

00:10:56,160 --> 00:11:00,000

stacks up. It's a massive investment, and

310

00:10:58,079 --> 00:11:01,920

I don't really want to be worried

311

00:11:00,000 --> 00:11:03,279

about

312

00:11:01,920 --> 00:11:05,040

not being able to pay the bank off

313

00:11:03,279 --> 00:11:06,560

because we'd be in big trouble then.

314

00:11:05,040 --> 00:11:08,560

It gives you the security that you

315

00:11:06,560 --> 00:11:10,320

know you're going to be safe. Having

316

00:11:08,560 --> 00:11:12,399

started with a 16,000-bird

317

00:11:10,320 --> 00:11:14,240

unit, clearly you gained your

318

00:11:12,399 --> 00:11:16,000

experience there, you gained confidence

319

00:11:14,240 --> 00:11:17,600

there and you built a second one. Would you

320

00:11:16,000 --> 00:11:19,519

want to build a third, or did you want to

321

00:11:17,600 --> 00:11:21,680

go bigger and planning restricted you?

322

00:11:19,519 --> 00:11:23,680

What's the capacity?

323

00:11:21,680 --> 00:11:25,600

There are a lot of poultry in

324

00:11:23,680 --> 00:11:27,279

mid Wales in particular. Is it

325

00:11:25,600 --> 00:11:29,200

becoming harder to build?

326

00:11:27,279 --> 00:11:31,920

Planning now is really, really difficult.

327

00:11:29,200 --> 00:11:34,320

Personally, I

328

00:11:31,920 --> 00:11:36,320

don't think I want to go

329

00:11:34,320 --> 00:11:37,519

anymore;

330

00:11:36,320 --> 00:11:39,040

331

00:11:37,519 --> 00:11:41,519

332

00:11:39,040 --> 00:11:43,680

it's a manageable size.

333

00:11:41,519 --> 00:11:45,760

But I would never say never.

334

00:11:43,680 --> 00:11:47,519

If one came up for sale or

335

00:11:45,760 --> 00:11:49,760

something,

336

00:11:47,519 --> 00:11:51,279

if it stacks up, then I would probably do

337

00:11:49,760 --> 00:11:54,320

something. But at the

338

00:11:51,279 --> 00:11:55,920

moment, I’m happy where I am now.

339

00:11:54,320 --> 00:11:57,920

The planning for this shed

340

00:11:55,920 --> 00:12:00,000

was a little bit harder

341

00:11:57,920 --> 00:12:03,440

than the first one; the first one was

342

00:12:00,000 --> 00:12:06,399

a breeze back in 2015.

343

00:12:03,440 --> 00:12:07,839

This one was a little bit

344

00:12:06,399 --> 00:12:09,040

more difficult.

345

00:12:07,839 --> 00:12:11,120

They are

346

00:12:09,040 --> 00:12:12,880

clamping down on ammonia emissions. Yes,

347

00:12:11,120 --> 00:12:14,399

and now, if somebody has a greenfield site,

348

00:12:12,880 --> 00:12:16,560

then it's going to be very,

349

00:12:14,399 --> 00:12:19,120

very difficult and very, very costly.

350

00:12:16,560 --> 00:12:20,320

Right.

351

00:12:19,120 --> 00:12:22,000

352

00:12:20,320 --> 00:12:23,440

The chicken muck then, has that got a

353

00:12:22,000 --> 00:12:26,560

value to it, particularly with an

354

00:12:23,440 --> 00:12:29,600

increase in fertiliser prices? Yes.

355

00:12:26,560 --> 00:12:32,320

We produce about four max brother a

356

00:12:29,600 --> 00:12:35,519

week.

357

00:12:32,320 --> 00:12:37,279

We charge around £120 a

358

00:12:35,519 --> 00:12:38,959

load,

359

00:12:37,279 --> 00:12:40,399

and at the moment

360

00:12:38,959 --> 00:12:43,519

361

00:12:40,399 --> 00:12:44,720

we've got a waiting list for muck.

362

00:12:43,519 --> 00:12:45,440

363

00:12:44,720 --> 00:12:46,720

We're

364

00:12:45,440 --> 00:12:48,639

trying to

365

00:12:46,720 --> 00:12:50,079

look after the customers, our old

366

00:12:48,639 --> 00:12:52,160

customers because

367

00:12:50,079 --> 00:12:53,440

I am aware that things may come

368

00:12:52,160 --> 00:12:55,279

back to normal,

369

00:12:53,440 --> 00:12:56,880

and I want them to realise that I did

370

00:12:55,279 --> 00:12:58,160

look after them, because

371

00:12:56,880 --> 00:12:59,680

maybe the new ones probably

372

00:12:58,160 --> 00:13:01,360

won't come back because they're further

373

00:12:59,680 --> 00:13:02,959

away. You're here for the long-term, aren’t you?

374

00:13:01,360 --> 00:13:04,079

We’re here for the long-term, so I

375

00:13:02,959 --> 00:13:06,880

do try to look after the old

376

00:13:04,079 --> 00:13:08,720

customers, and

377

00:13:06,880 --> 00:13:09,920

we try not to take too many new

378

00:13:08,720 --> 00:13:11,600

people on,

379

00:13:09,920 --> 00:13:14,079

but it's definitely added

380

00:13:11,600 --> 00:13:14,880

value to it.

381

00:13:14,079 --> 00:13:17,600

382

00:13:14,880 --> 00:13:19,519

Obviously, having an extra cost with

383

00:13:17,600 --> 00:13:20,959

feed and things, it stacks it up.

384

00:13:19,519 --> 00:13:22,560

Of course.

385

00:13:20,959 --> 00:13:24,480

There's a lot of talk now about carbon

386

00:13:22,560 --> 00:13:28,320

footprinting, and possibly you've had to

387

00:13:24,480 --> 00:13:30,240

do that with your Tesco contract.

388

00:13:28,320 --> 00:13:31,760

What's your view on carbon footprinting?

389

00:13:30,240 --> 00:13:33,839

It seems to be something that

390

00:13:31,760 --> 00:13:36,079

everybody's trying to learn quickly; it's

391

00:13:33,839 --> 00:13:38,399

a new language; it's a new

392

00:13:36,079 --> 00:13:40,880

world, understanding the flows of

393

00:13:38,399 --> 00:13:42,880

emissions and sequestration.

394

00:13:40,880 --> 00:13:44,560

What's your take on it? I think

395

00:13:42,880 --> 00:13:46,240

the problem we have at the moment is,

396

00:13:44,560 --> 00:13:48,720

there's so many different carbon

397

00:13:46,240 --> 00:13:50,959

calculators, we need to get one

398

00:13:48,720 --> 00:13:53,600

that works for everybody.

399

00:13:50,959 --> 00:13:55,120

I did one for Tesco,

400

00:13:53,600 --> 00:13:56,720

and they wanted me to do their carbon

401

00:13:55,120 --> 00:13:58,800

calculator, but all they really wanted to

402

00:13:56,720 --> 00:14:01,600

know was where the feed came from and

403

00:13:58,800 --> 00:14:02,480

where my electricity was coming from, and

404

00:14:01,600 --> 00:14:04,240

they

405

00:14:02,480 --> 00:14:06,560

didn't ask about how many trees we

406

00:14:04,240 --> 00:14:09,279

had on the farm; they didn't want to know

407

00:14:06,560 --> 00:14:11,600

anything about the 40 acres we have for

408

00:14:09,279 --> 00:14:13,040

the free-range area; they didn't want to know

409

00:14:11,600 --> 00:14:14,480

anything about the mountain; they didn't

410

00:14:13,040 --> 00:14:17,839

want to know about

411

00:14:14,480 --> 00:14:20,240

the 30 acres of peatland we have

412

00:14:17,839 --> 00:14:21,760

with thousands of tonnes of carbon that’s

413

00:14:20,240 --> 00:14:24,880

being stored in there.

414

00:14:21,760 --> 00:14:26,800

But I do

415

00:14:24,880 --> 00:14:29,360

416

00:14:26,800 --> 00:14:31,519

think that there may

417

00:14:29,360 --> 00:14:32,480

be some business opportunities there for

418

00:14:31,519 --> 00:14:34,720

farmers

419

00:14:32,480 --> 00:14:36,000

who have peat bogs and things like

420

00:14:34,720 --> 00:14:38,560

that where they can

421

00:14:36,000 --> 00:14:41,360

generate an income from it; I

422

00:14:38,560 --> 00:14:42,560

hope that will be something in

423

00:14:41,360 --> 00:14:46,639

the future.

424

00:14:42,560 --> 00:14:47,920

But the reality is,

425

00:14:46,639 --> 00:14:48,720

I feel

426

00:14:47,920 --> 00:14:50,880

427

00:14:48,720 --> 00:14:52,800

the big companies

428

00:14:50,880 --> 00:14:55,279

should really be trying to reduce their

429

00:14:52,800 --> 00:14:56,320

carbon rather than buying places up,

430

00:14:55,279 --> 00:14:58,399

431

00:14:56,320 --> 00:15:00,560

and it's like a guilt-free way of…

432

00:14:58,399 --> 00:15:02,000

It’s like a whole debate about green washing, isn’t it? Yes, and

433

00:15:00,560 --> 00:15:03,760

what

434

00:15:02,000 --> 00:15:06,000

they really should be doing is

435

00:15:03,760 --> 00:15:07,360

reducing their own carbon emissions to

436

00:15:06,000 --> 00:15:09,040

start off with.

437

00:15:07,360 --> 00:15:11,279

One of the things you're keen to do here

438

00:15:09,040 --> 00:15:13,279

is to educate the public about egg

439

00:15:11,279 --> 00:15:14,880

production, food production, generally, and so

440

00:15:13,279 --> 00:15:18,160

you've inbuilt into the design of

441

00:15:14,880 --> 00:15:20,560

this second poultry shed a big viewing

442

00:15:18,160 --> 00:15:22,720

room with windows looking out to the

443

00:15:20,560 --> 00:15:25,920

packing area and also into the

444

00:15:22,720 --> 00:15:27,920

sheds to see the birds.

445

00:15:25,920 --> 00:15:30,399

That wasn't something that was expected

446

00:15:27,920 --> 00:15:33,040

of you. Tesco didn't want you to do it,

447

00:15:30,399 --> 00:15:36,959

but you wanted to do it. I feel

448

00:15:33,040 --> 00:15:38,839

it's important that

449

00:15:36,959 --> 00:15:40,079

people know where their food comes

450

00:15:38,839 --> 00:15:44,079

from,

451

00:15:40,079 --> 00:15:45,279

I had seen it in Holland; I was in

452

00:15:44,079 --> 00:15:48,800

Kipster

453

00:15:45,279 --> 00:15:50,959

on a wet Sunday afternoon,

454

00:15:48,800 --> 00:15:53,519

and I stopped at this chicken shed;

455

00:15:50,959 --> 00:15:56,000

I was doing Knowledge Exchange with

456

00:15:53,519 --> 00:15:58,160

Farming Connect actually. I went to

457

00:15:56,000 --> 00:16:00,800

this this farm on a Sunday, and there was

458

00:15:58,160 --> 00:16:02,720

like 13, 15 people there, and they were

459

00:16:00,800 --> 00:16:05,440

all children and they were all looking,

460

00:16:02,720 --> 00:16:06,720

and they were just educating

461

00:16:05,440 --> 00:16:08,480

those people,

462

00:16:06,720 --> 00:16:12,000

and I just think

463

00:16:08,480 --> 00:16:14,560

we should really be doing the same here.

464

00:16:12,000 --> 00:16:17,120

I’m proud of what we do here, and

465

00:16:14,560 --> 00:16:20,959

I’m proud of producing

466

00:16:17,120 --> 00:16:23,279

good quality food, and also producing

467

00:16:20,959 --> 00:16:25,759

renewable energy.

468

00:16:23,279 --> 00:16:26,959

That's not just

469

00:16:25,759 --> 00:16:28,639

me,

470

00:16:26,959 --> 00:16:31,600

it’s

471

00:16:28,639 --> 00:16:33,440

every farmer in Wales that does the same, so

472

00:16:31,600 --> 00:16:36,560

it's important that we

473

00:16:33,440 --> 00:16:37,920

tell them the story. And

474

00:16:36,560 --> 00:16:39,600

take advantage of every

475

00:16:37,920 --> 00:16:41,040

opportunity to tell the story, and one of

476

00:16:39,600 --> 00:16:42,639

the other ways you're doing that is

477

00:16:41,040 --> 00:16:43,839

through your camping site on the

478

00:16:42,639 --> 00:16:47,120

mountain, which we are going to go see

479

00:16:43,839 --> 00:16:48,959

next. Yes. I quite enjoy

480

00:16:47,120 --> 00:16:50,880

telling people the story,

481

00:16:48,959 --> 00:16:52,720

but they seem to be listening.

482

00:16:50,880 --> 00:16:54,639

We’ll go

483

00:16:52,720 --> 00:16:56,959

up there and I’ll show

484

00:16:54,639 --> 00:16:58,320

you the views from there. Perfect.

485

00:16:56,959 --> 00:17:00,480

486

00:16:58,320 --> 00:17:02,079

Llŷr, describe where we are now

487

00:17:00,480 --> 00:17:05,760

in relation to the farm, and what mountain

488

00:17:02,079 --> 00:17:07,039

is this? This mountain was called

489

00:17:05,760 --> 00:17:08,400

Mynydd Bryneryr

490

00:17:07,039 --> 00:17:10,000

491

00:17:08,400 --> 00:17:12,160

because it used to be owned by

492

00:17:10,000 --> 00:17:13,919

the next farm,

493

00:17:12,160 --> 00:17:15,280

but we call it Mynydd Derwydd because

494

00:17:13,919 --> 00:17:18,720

we don't want

495

00:17:15,280 --> 00:17:21,360

campers to go and moider our

496

00:17:18,720 --> 00:17:22,720

neighbours, and so we call it Mynydd Derwydd

497

00:17:21,360 --> 00:17:24,400

Wild Camping.

498

00:17:22,720 --> 00:17:26,400

Where did the idea of wild camping come

499

00:17:24,400 --> 00:17:27,199

from? You must have been inspired by

500

00:17:26,400 --> 00:17:29,840

501

00:17:27,199 --> 00:17:32,400

the idea somewhere?

502

00:17:29,840 --> 00:17:35,280

I noticed on the holiday home,

503

00:17:32,400 --> 00:17:37,360

the website we use - Airbnb, it tells

504

00:17:35,280 --> 00:17:38,240

you how many people have visited the

505

00:17:37,360 --> 00:17:40,240

site

506

00:17:38,240 --> 00:17:41,440

in a month, and usually it's around the

507

00:17:40,240 --> 00:17:43,919

500,

508

00:17:41,440 --> 00:17:46,080

but it was well over a thousand

509

00:17:43,919 --> 00:17:48,559

during COVID.

510

00:17:46,080 --> 00:17:50,000

Also,

511

00:17:48,559 --> 00:17:51,760

512

00:17:50,000 --> 00:17:53,919

the laws with planning had

513

00:17:51,760 --> 00:17:56,960

changed – it doubled,

514

00:17:53,919 --> 00:17:58,400

so I just took advantage of both

515

00:17:56,960 --> 00:18:00,480

situations.

516

00:17:58,400 --> 00:18:03,760

517

00:18:00,480 --> 00:18:05,200

518

00:18:03,760 --> 00:18:07,280

I was thinking about it and I was thinking

519

00:18:05,200 --> 00:18:09,679

about it for maybe a couple of

520

00:18:07,280 --> 00:18:11,760

days, and then I told a neighbour that

521

00:18:09,679 --> 00:18:12,960

I was doing it. Once I've told

522

00:18:11,760 --> 00:18:14,240

a neighbour,

523

00:18:12,960 --> 00:18:15,919

that's it then, I've got to do it. You're

524

00:18:14,240 --> 00:18:17,440

committed! I've committed.

525

00:18:15,919 --> 00:18:19,200

526

00:18:17,440 --> 00:18:20,720

And I found myself thinking

527

00:18:19,200 --> 00:18:22,160

when I was talking to him, “I’m going

528

00:18:20,720 --> 00:18:24,160

to tell him, I’m going to tell him”, and

529

00:18:22,160 --> 00:18:25,120

then I told him, and then that's it - done

530

00:18:24,160 --> 00:18:27,520

it!

531

00:18:25,120 --> 00:18:28,799

What was his response? He

532

00:18:27,520 --> 00:18:31,280

was fine. He thought it was a

533

00:18:28,799 --> 00:18:33,280

good idea, and then within I think

534

00:18:31,280 --> 00:18:34,880

a week of that

535

00:18:33,280 --> 00:18:36,160

I had my first customer.

536

00:18:34,880 --> 00:18:37,600

537

00:18:36,160 --> 00:18:40,640

How did you get the customers?

538

00:18:37,600 --> 00:18:42,720

You use Facebook to advertise quite

539

00:18:40,640 --> 00:18:44,799

hard? I spent a couple of

540

00:18:42,720 --> 00:18:48,559

thousand pounds on Facebook, and

541

00:18:44,799 --> 00:18:50,160

the advantage of that is,

542

00:18:48,559 --> 00:18:52,880

543

00:18:50,160 --> 00:18:55,120

you’re advertising specifically to the

544

00:18:52,880 --> 00:18:57,360

people you need to target, so people

545

00:18:55,120 --> 00:18:59,120

who drive 4x4, and

546

00:18:57,360 --> 00:19:03,039

there's even a wild campsite

547

00:18:59,120 --> 00:19:05,840

option on there; there’s even an option for

548

00:19:03,039 --> 00:19:08,240

adventurous people, people who

549

00:19:05,840 --> 00:19:09,600

like to walk, and then you just

550

00:19:08,240 --> 00:19:11,679

target these.

551

00:19:09,600 --> 00:19:13,840

Literally within

552

00:19:11,679 --> 00:19:15,679

a few

553

00:19:13,840 --> 00:19:16,720

minutes, you start getting

554

00:19:15,679 --> 00:19:18,480

replies.

555

00:19:16,720 --> 00:19:20,880

And they were booking online, paying

556

00:19:18,480 --> 00:19:23,280

online and just turning up?

557

00:19:20,880 --> 00:19:25,280

Yes, paying online and booking or maybe phoning,

558

00:19:23,280 --> 00:19:27,440

depending on how they want to do it,

559

00:19:25,280 --> 00:19:29,440

and then they turn up and

560

00:19:27,440 --> 00:19:32,240

we show them the gates. We

561

00:19:29,440 --> 00:19:33,600

562

00:19:32,240 --> 00:19:36,080

usually

563

00:19:33,600 --> 00:19:37,600

take them to the top here, and then

564

00:19:36,080 --> 00:19:39,600

we basically tell them “Once you get to

565

00:19:37,600 --> 00:19:40,799

the top, you decide where you want to go”.

566

00:19:39,600 --> 00:19:42,320

567

00:19:40,799 --> 00:19:44,799

It's 80 acres,

568

00:19:42,320 --> 00:19:47,360

and they can choose any site they

569

00:19:44,799 --> 00:19:49,679

want. What's included in

570

00:19:47,360 --> 00:19:51,679

the fee? It's £30 per person per

571

00:19:49,679 --> 00:19:54,799

night. It's £30 per

572

00:19:51,679 --> 00:19:57,360

tent per night, and it’s

573

00:19:54,799 --> 00:19:58,720

up to four people, and then it's

574

00:19:57,360 --> 00:20:02,159

additional then.

575

00:19:58,720 --> 00:20:04,880

They don't get anything;

576

00:20:02,159 --> 00:20:07,760

we just give them a toilet and warm

577

00:20:04,880 --> 00:20:09,600

water and drinking water, and that's it really.

578

00:20:07,760 --> 00:20:10,960

That was the only investment

579

00:20:09,600 --> 00:20:12,880

you had to make just to make sure you

580

00:20:10,960 --> 00:20:15,200

had the facilities? We already

581

00:20:12,880 --> 00:20:17,120

had it, but we just made it

582

00:20:15,200 --> 00:20:18,400

a little bit nicer;

583

00:20:17,120 --> 00:20:21,200

584

00:20:18,400 --> 00:20:23,760

we made it look the

585

00:20:21,200 --> 00:20:25,039

part really, and we went from

586

00:20:23,760 --> 00:20:26,400

there and

587

00:20:25,039 --> 00:20:27,919

haven’t looked.

588

00:20:26,400 --> 00:20:29,520

The people who

589

00:20:27,919 --> 00:20:31,600

come here, they're very well-equipped,

590

00:20:29,520 --> 00:20:34,960

aren't they? They're obviously

591

00:20:31,600 --> 00:20:36,400

seasoned wild campers. You might get

592

00:20:34,960 --> 00:20:38,000

the odd one that has just bought

593

00:20:36,400 --> 00:20:39,520

a tent from Tesco and decided to go on a

594

00:20:38,000 --> 00:20:40,880

mountain, but most of them are quite

595

00:20:39,520 --> 00:20:42,559

experienced and know what they're doing?

596

00:20:40,880 --> 00:20:44,080

Yes, most of them. I would say 90%

597

00:20:42,559 --> 00:20:46,720

of them. They've got their

598

00:20:44,080 --> 00:20:48,640

4x4s and some have trailers, and

599

00:20:46,720 --> 00:20:50,159

600

00:20:48,640 --> 00:20:53,039

they just like to go somewhere

601

00:20:50,159 --> 00:20:55,200

totally different.

602

00:20:53,039 --> 00:20:57,440

I think the £30

603

00:20:55,200 --> 00:20:59,919

gives them

604

00:20:57,440 --> 00:21:01,919

more exclusivity.

605

00:20:59,919 --> 00:21:04,000

I won't get more

606

00:21:01,919 --> 00:21:06,080

than ten people; I will stop groups of more than

607

00:21:04,000 --> 00:21:08,240

ten. So ten people over - eight to

608

00:21:06,080 --> 00:21:11,200

ten plots? Yes, sort of ten

609

00:21:08,240 --> 00:21:13,679

plots or ten

610

00:21:11,200 --> 00:21:16,000

sites on this 80 acres.

611

00:21:13,679 --> 00:21:18,159

I’ve been to places,

612

00:21:16,000 --> 00:21:19,760

and I remember a couple of years ago we were

613

00:21:18,159 --> 00:21:21,200

in a two-acre field and there must have

614

00:21:19,760 --> 00:21:23,840

been

615

00:21:21,200 --> 00:21:25,600

15 or 16 of us, and

616

00:21:23,840 --> 00:21:27,360

you do feel

617

00:21:25,600 --> 00:21:29,120

like everybody's on top of each

618

00:21:27,360 --> 00:21:30,480

other.

619

00:21:29,120 --> 00:21:33,360

And that's how you can

620

00:21:30,480 --> 00:21:35,360

command the sort of premium price.

621

00:21:33,360 --> 00:21:36,960

We've also got 16,000 acres

622

00:21:35,360 --> 00:21:38,960

of forestry behind us

623

00:21:36,960 --> 00:21:40,240

that they can

624

00:21:38,960 --> 00:21:43,440

walk all day, and they probably won't see

625

00:21:40,240 --> 00:21:44,720

anybody there. It just gives them that

626

00:21:43,440 --> 00:21:46,559

space

627

00:21:44,720 --> 00:21:48,320

that they don't usually get.

628

00:21:46,559 --> 00:21:50,799

Do you think it's a growing trend, that people

629

00:21:48,320 --> 00:21:53,360

want to go to remote places, off-grid

630

00:21:50,799 --> 00:21:54,400

holidays in these busy lives we all lead?

631

00:21:53,360 --> 00:21:56,559

632

00:21:54,400 --> 00:21:57,600

I guess you still got mobile signal here?

633

00:21:56,559 --> 00:21:59,200

Yes, you've got mobile signal. We've

634

00:21:57,600 --> 00:22:01,600

got 4G here.

635

00:21:59,200 --> 00:22:04,799

636

00:22:01,600 --> 00:22:06,720

Especially with COVID and

637

00:22:04,799 --> 00:22:08,320

people having been in lockdown and

638

00:22:06,720 --> 00:22:10,559

in their houses, it was just

639

00:22:08,320 --> 00:22:13,200

something totally opposite, and it

640

00:22:10,559 --> 00:22:14,799

was quite nice for them. I don’t know.

641

00:22:13,200 --> 00:22:16,080

It

642

00:22:14,799 --> 00:22:18,640

643

00:22:16,080 --> 00:22:20,240

may not carry on, but at the

644

00:22:18,640 --> 00:22:22,000

moment, we're still getting

645

00:22:20,240 --> 00:22:22,720

bookings, so I’m happy to carry

646

00:22:22,000 --> 00:22:25,679

on.

647

00:22:22,720 --> 00:22:27,440

It’s income from a piece of land that

648

00:22:25,679 --> 00:22:29,360

isn't that productive

649

00:22:27,440 --> 00:22:32,640

agriculturally, isn't it? Yes. This

650

00:22:29,360 --> 00:22:34,240

field or this mountain, it does grow

651

00:22:32,640 --> 00:22:35,520

grass and rocks

652

00:22:34,240 --> 00:22:37,120

quite well,

653

00:22:35,520 --> 00:22:39,280

but it's made the most

654

00:22:37,120 --> 00:22:40,559

unprofitable field

655

00:22:39,280 --> 00:22:42,480

to one of

656

00:22:40,559 --> 00:22:44,960

the profitable fields. I

657

00:22:42,480 --> 00:22:47,520

can't complain.

658

00:22:44,960 --> 00:22:48,480

There’s

659

00:22:47,520 --> 00:22:50,320

always

660

00:22:48,480 --> 00:22:51,679

something that needs doing.

661

00:22:50,320 --> 00:22:54,640

And hear the saying “You

662

00:22:51,679 --> 00:22:56,000

can't make a living on a view”, I guess

663

00:22:54,640 --> 00:22:58,320

you're trying to prove those people

664

00:22:56,000 --> 00:23:01,120

wrong? Yes. You can’t get fat on

665

00:22:58,320 --> 00:23:04,640

a view.

666

00:23:01,120 --> 00:23:05,919

We are so lucky.

667

00:23:04,640 --> 00:23:08,240

This is where

668

00:23:05,919 --> 00:23:10,799

we bring the children up and we

669

00:23:08,240 --> 00:23:13,200

enjoy it as a family, and we just thought

670

00:23:10,799 --> 00:23:15,440

“Well, if we enjoy it, why won’t

671

00:23:13,200 --> 00:23:17,120

everybody else?”.

672

00:23:15,440 --> 00:23:18,480

Interestingly, as we were driving up, we

673

00:23:17,120 --> 00:23:21,760

passed

674

00:23:18,480 --> 00:23:23,840

a camper in a Land Rover Discovery, a

675

00:23:21,760 --> 00:23:25,600

discovery very similar to the one you

676

00:23:23,840 --> 00:23:28,240

just drove to

677

00:23:25,600 --> 00:23:30,240

Ukraine some weeks ago. Clearly the

678

00:23:28,240 --> 00:23:32,480

situation in Ukraine is absolutely

679

00:23:30,240 --> 00:23:34,720

devastating.

680

00:23:32,480 --> 00:23:36,880

You were inspired by the situation to

681

00:23:34,720 --> 00:23:39,120

act, and in the way you've done with all

682

00:23:36,880 --> 00:23:41,200

the businesses, you've acted quickly.

683

00:23:39,120 --> 00:23:43,520

684

00:23:41,200 --> 00:23:46,080

I do have

685

00:23:43,520 --> 00:23:47,120

a history of doing charity work.

686

00:23:46,080 --> 00:23:49,520

687

00:23:47,120 --> 00:23:50,880

We started a charity called Cam wrth Gam

688

00:23:49,520 --> 00:23:53,440

(Step by Step)

689

00:23:50,880 --> 00:23:54,400

with three friends, Elen and Lowri.

690

00:23:53,440 --> 00:23:57,679

691

00:23:54,400 --> 00:23:59,840

From 2007 to 2012, we were going out to

692

00:23:57,679 --> 00:24:02,080

Africa to build schools,

693

00:23:59,840 --> 00:24:03,840

and then after 2012

694

00:24:02,080 --> 00:24:06,320

life caught up with us and we all got

695

00:24:03,840 --> 00:24:09,279

married and had children,

696

00:24:06,320 --> 00:24:10,799

and the charity was put on hold.

697

00:24:09,279 --> 00:24:13,120

Then

698

00:24:10,799 --> 00:24:15,600

Elen rang up saying there was a bit of

699

00:24:13,120 --> 00:24:17,120

money left in the charity fund, and it

700

00:24:15,600 --> 00:24:19,200

would be a good opportunity for us to

701

00:24:17,120 --> 00:24:20,480

spend that money and close the

702

00:24:19,200 --> 00:24:24,480

account.

703

00:24:20,480 --> 00:24:27,520

But the previous day, on the Thursday

704

00:24:24,480 --> 00:24:30,000

I'd seen a Tweet from an

705

00:24:27,520 --> 00:24:33,200

Ukrainian farmer or a Dutch farmer who

706

00:24:30,000 --> 00:24:34,880

farms in Ukraine, and he

707

00:24:33,200 --> 00:24:36,159

had put an appeal for 4x4

708

00:24:34,880 --> 00:24:36,880

vehicles,

709

00:24:36,159 --> 00:24:39,760

and

710

00:24:36,880 --> 00:24:41,679

I just put the two and two together.

711

00:24:39,760 --> 00:24:44,159

We made a decision on the

712

00:24:41,679 --> 00:24:45,600

Friday that we were

713

00:24:44,159 --> 00:24:47,679

going to do something,

714

00:24:45,600 --> 00:24:49,760

and within a week we were in Ukraine

715

00:24:47,679 --> 00:24:52,240

delivering nearly £24,000 worth of

716

00:24:49,760 --> 00:24:54,799

aid. In less than a week you decided

717

00:24:52,240 --> 00:24:57,679

to do something, you bought the vehicle,

718

00:24:54,799 --> 00:25:00,000

you got £24,000 worth of sponsorship,

719

00:24:57,679 --> 00:25:02,480

a trailer from Ifor Williams, and reached

720

00:25:00,000 --> 00:25:03,200

the Ukrainian border?

721

00:25:02,480 --> 00:25:04,799

Yes.

722

00:25:03,200 --> 00:25:05,840

It was pretty remarkable what we

723

00:25:04,799 --> 00:25:06,960

achieved

724

00:25:05,840 --> 00:25:09,360

725

00:25:06,960 --> 00:25:11,120

when you put it like. But

726

00:25:09,360 --> 00:25:12,799

at the time, we were still

727

00:25:11,120 --> 00:25:15,600

farming and still doing the work.

728

00:25:12,799 --> 00:25:19,120

729

00:25:15,600 --> 00:25:22,400

We've got a great team. My wife,

730

00:25:19,120 --> 00:25:24,080

she's a vet, and so she was

731

00:25:22,400 --> 00:25:26,240

able to go on the

732

00:25:24,080 --> 00:25:29,520

Ukrainian government website and see

733

00:25:26,240 --> 00:25:30,480

exactly what they needed.

734

00:25:29,520 --> 00:25:32,320

735

00:25:30,480 --> 00:25:34,720

There are a lot of things

736

00:25:32,320 --> 00:25:36,400

that vets use that doctors use;

737

00:25:34,720 --> 00:25:38,240

it's the same product.

738

00:25:36,400 --> 00:25:40,720

Whatever they wanted

739

00:25:38,240 --> 00:25:41,919

and what we could get, we bought. We

740

00:25:40,720 --> 00:25:42,880

bought nearly £12,000

741

00:25:41,919 --> 00:25:46,240

worth of

742

00:25:42,880 --> 00:25:48,799

veterinary equipment, and

743

00:25:46,240 --> 00:25:50,559

they were so grateful. Rhys, who was driving

744

00:25:48,799 --> 00:25:52,080

the Land Rover,

745

00:25:50,559 --> 00:25:53,919

said it was like the Red Sea when

746

00:25:52,080 --> 00:25:55,679

they arrived because they

747

00:25:53,919 --> 00:25:56,799

were desperately wanting

748

00:25:55,679 --> 00:25:57,520

749

00:25:56,799 --> 00:25:58,720

750

00:25:57,520 --> 00:26:01,200

medical aid.

751

00:25:58,720 --> 00:26:03,200

752

00:26:01,200 --> 00:26:04,559

What was it like at the border?

753

00:26:03,200 --> 00:26:06,240

Clearly there are checkpoints there and

754

00:26:04,559 --> 00:26:08,400

there's a lot of activity, but did you feel

755

00:26:06,240 --> 00:26:09,760

in any danger at all, or did you witness

756

00:26:08,400 --> 00:26:11,279

anything?

757

00:26:09,760 --> 00:26:13,679

758

00:26:11,279 --> 00:26:16,640

We saw a lot of refugees,

759

00:26:13,679 --> 00:26:18,640

buses and a lot of Ukrainian cars

760

00:26:16,640 --> 00:26:21,440

coming out,

761

00:26:18,640 --> 00:26:23,120

but we never saw anything.

762

00:26:21,440 --> 00:26:25,039

763

00:26:23,120 --> 00:26:26,960

The only thing we did see on the way

764

00:26:25,039 --> 00:26:28,559

back was

765

00:26:26,960 --> 00:26:31,520

quite a large fire

766

00:26:28,559 --> 00:26:32,960

in Ukraine itself.

767

00:26:31,520 --> 00:26:34,720

768

00:26:32,960 --> 00:26:37,919

It was only that evening when we were in

769

00:26:34,720 --> 00:26:40,240

the hotel we noticed that it was the

770

00:26:37,919 --> 00:26:42,640

Russians who had bombed the

771

00:26:40,240 --> 00:26:44,559

military base that quite close to

772

00:26:42,640 --> 00:26:45,600

us; we were about six miles away

773

00:26:44,559 --> 00:26:47,120

from it.

774

00:26:45,600 --> 00:26:48,000

775

00:26:47,120 --> 00:26:49,600

But

776

00:26:48,000 --> 00:26:51,679

when you're there,

777

00:26:49,600 --> 00:26:54,000

you don't really feel, well I didn't

778

00:26:51,679 --> 00:26:56,480

feel at any time that my life was in any

779

00:26:54,000 --> 00:26:58,400

danger. Would you go back there do

780

00:26:56,480 --> 00:26:59,440

you think? I would have no

781

00:26:58,400 --> 00:27:02,960

issues going back.

782

00:26:59,440 --> 00:27:04,880

783

00:27:02,960 --> 00:27:07,360

A lot of people when we got back were saying

784

00:27:04,880 --> 00:27:10,240

things like we were all heroes

785

00:27:07,360 --> 00:27:12,720

and things, but the reality is,

786

00:27:10,240 --> 00:27:14,159

all we did was drink too much coffee, ate

787

00:27:12,720 --> 00:27:16,480

too much Haribos and

788

00:27:14,159 --> 00:27:18,080

sat on our bums, and we just unloaded;

789

00:27:16,480 --> 00:27:18,960

I don't think we did

790

00:27:18,080 --> 00:27:21,919

anything

791

00:27:18,960 --> 00:27:23,039

spectacular. The real heroes

792

00:27:21,919 --> 00:27:24,480

are the

793

00:27:23,039 --> 00:27:26,799

people who

794

00:27:24,480 --> 00:27:29,039

gave us money, because without that

795

00:27:26,799 --> 00:27:30,080

money, we never would have been able to

796

00:27:29,039 --> 00:27:30,960

buy something

797

00:27:30,080 --> 00:27:32,399

so

798

00:27:30,960 --> 00:27:35,520

much and do it in such a

799

00:27:32,399 --> 00:27:37,679

short period of time. I was

800

00:27:35,520 --> 00:27:40,000

overwhelmed by the generosity

801

00:27:37,679 --> 00:27:41,279

of people. People were

802

00:27:40,000 --> 00:27:43,919

posting money,

803

00:27:41,279 --> 00:27:45,919

and

804

00:27:43,919 --> 00:27:49,039

turning up

805

00:27:45,919 --> 00:27:51,039

to the farm with £20. People were

806

00:27:49,039 --> 00:27:52,480

so generous. It's really

807

00:27:51,039 --> 00:27:54,159

pulled the community together. Even

808

00:27:52,480 --> 00:27:56,799

driving through Cerrigydrudion earlier,

809

00:27:54,159 --> 00:27:58,240

the Ukrainian flag is everywhere.

810

00:27:56,799 --> 00:28:01,200

The community has really got

811

00:27:58,240 --> 00:28:03,919

behind you. I think

812

00:28:01,200 --> 00:28:05,200

this war is

813

00:28:03,919 --> 00:28:07,840

definitely affecting people;

814

00:28:05,200 --> 00:28:09,360

it's

815

00:28:07,840 --> 00:28:11,360

affecting their lives and

816

00:28:09,360 --> 00:28:13,440

it’s

817

00:28:11,360 --> 00:28:17,120

affecting their pockets, and so it's a lot

818

00:28:13,440 --> 00:28:19,600

closer to themselves.

819

00:28:17,120 --> 00:28:21,840

820

00:28:19,600 --> 00:28:22,559

I already

821

00:28:21,840 --> 00:28:24,640

know

822

00:28:22,559 --> 00:28:25,840

that the Land Rover has been into Ukraine

823

00:28:24,640 --> 00:28:28,480

twice,

824

00:28:25,840 --> 00:28:31,200

and it has brought 12

825

00:28:28,480 --> 00:28:33,360

refugees out of Ukraine,

826

00:28:31,200 --> 00:28:34,240

and that was last week.

827

00:28:33,360 --> 00:28:35,679

and

828

00:28:34,240 --> 00:28:38,640

For me,

829

00:28:35,679 --> 00:28:40,880

that's enough.

830

00:28:38,640 --> 00:28:42,960

If she broke down now, then I would feel

831

00:28:40,880 --> 00:28:46,399

like she's done her job;

832

00:28:42,960 --> 00:28:47,760

it's great. Well done you.

833

00:28:46,399 --> 00:28:50,080

There's one other question I want to ask

834

00:28:47,760 --> 00:28:51,760

before we wrap things up, Llŷr. Both of

835

00:28:50,080 --> 00:28:53,760

us have been very lucky to have been

836

00:28:51,760 --> 00:28:56,159

members of the Agri Academy,

837

00:28:53,760 --> 00:28:59,120

subsequently become leaders of

838

00:28:56,159 --> 00:29:01,200

different programmes within the Academy.

839

00:28:59,120 --> 00:29:02,480

To what extent do you think the Academy

840

00:29:01,200 --> 00:29:04,480

841

00:29:02,480 --> 00:29:06,640

is held responsible for some of the

842

00:29:04,480 --> 00:29:08,080

success you've had at Derwydd and

843

00:29:06,640 --> 00:29:09,200

all the ideas and businesses you've

844

00:29:08,080 --> 00:29:12,399

established?

845

00:29:09,200 --> 00:29:15,520

I can honestly say

846

00:29:12,399 --> 00:29:17,840

Agri Academy has been a part

847

00:29:15,520 --> 00:29:20,320

of every business that I have

848

00:29:17,840 --> 00:29:21,760

done. There are so many

849

00:29:20,320 --> 00:29:24,960

different people who've done the Agri

850

00:29:21,760 --> 00:29:27,520

Academy, and when I think

851

00:29:24,960 --> 00:29:30,960

of a project or a business or something

852

00:29:27,520 --> 00:29:32,720

that I want to do, I will honestly go

853

00:29:30,960 --> 00:29:34,240

through the Agri Academy, and think

854

00:29:32,720 --> 00:29:36,159

“This guy

855

00:29:34,240 --> 00:29:38,240

may know something, or may even know

856

00:29:36,159 --> 00:29:39,679

somebody who knows somebody”, and having

857

00:29:38,240 --> 00:29:42,159

that contact

858

00:29:39,679 --> 00:29:44,399

is great.

859

00:29:42,159 --> 00:29:46,799

With the holiday homes, I was able to

860

00:29:44,399 --> 00:29:48,799

speak to James Powell, and he was able to

861

00:29:46,799 --> 00:29:50,720

tell me what are the best things

862

00:29:48,799 --> 00:29:53,039

because he's got holiday homes, and he

863

00:29:50,720 --> 00:29:55,600

was able to give me really good

864

00:29:53,039 --> 00:29:56,559

advice. Laura

865

00:29:55,600 --> 00:29:59,200

866

00:29:56,559 --> 00:30:02,000

and Bryony were able to help me

867

00:29:59,200 --> 00:30:03,840

with the campsite, or maybe they

868

00:30:02,000 --> 00:30:05,440

didn't actually help, but I was listening to

869

00:30:03,840 --> 00:30:06,720

what they were telling me about their

870

00:30:05,440 --> 00:30:07,600

campsites,

871

00:30:06,720 --> 00:30:09,600

and then

872

00:30:07,600 --> 00:30:11,440

that just gave me the confidence to

873

00:30:09,600 --> 00:30:14,000

know that I can do this.

874

00:30:11,440 --> 00:30:15,360

With the free-range

875

00:30:14,000 --> 00:30:19,200

eggs,

876

00:30:15,360 --> 00:30:20,880

I did the Agri Academy in 2013,

877

00:30:19,200 --> 00:30:24,320

and

878

00:30:20,880 --> 00:30:26,320

afterwards I felt

879

00:30:24,320 --> 00:30:28,880

empty or I felt

880

00:30:26,320 --> 00:30:31,440

I needed something else to do. I

881

00:30:28,880 --> 00:30:34,080

joined the Tesco Future Farmers,

882

00:30:31,440 --> 00:30:36,640

and it was then that I realised that

883

00:30:34,080 --> 00:30:38,399

they wanted free-range eggs, so

884

00:30:36,640 --> 00:30:39,840

it really did

885

00:30:38,399 --> 00:30:41,760

886

00:30:39,840 --> 00:30:43,840

help. One

887

00:30:41,760 --> 00:30:45,919

of the main reasons why I left the Agri

888

00:30:43,840 --> 00:30:48,720

Academy in 2013 was,

889

00:30:45,919 --> 00:30:50,720

I decided then that

890

00:30:48,720 --> 00:30:53,840

I wanted to farm

891

00:30:50,720 --> 00:30:56,000

without payments, because

892

00:30:53,840 --> 00:30:58,320

the majority of the profit that we

893

00:30:56,000 --> 00:31:00,880

were making in 2013 was

894

00:30:58,320 --> 00:31:03,440

from the subsidy,

895

00:31:00,880 --> 00:31:06,159

and I just felt that

896

00:31:03,440 --> 00:31:07,840

we had too many

897

00:31:06,159 --> 00:31:09,600

eggs in one basket,

898

00:31:07,840 --> 00:31:10,640

and that subsidy could be taken

899

00:31:09,600 --> 00:31:13,679

away, and

900

00:31:10,640 --> 00:31:17,039

so I wanted to be able to sustain the

901

00:31:13,679 --> 00:31:18,480

farm without payments.

902

00:31:17,039 --> 00:31:20,080

903

904

00:31:20,080 --> 00:31:24,399

905

00:31:22,399 --> 00:31:26,720

I’ve used the subsidy basically to

906

00:31:24,399 --> 00:31:28,799

invest into businesses, and to

907

00:31:26,720 --> 00:31:31,200

build resilience,

908

00:31:28,799 --> 00:31:32,799

and as the Single Farm Payment is

909

00:31:31,200 --> 00:31:35,279

being phased out,

910

00:31:32,799 --> 00:31:36,960

I’m hoping we are

911

00:31:35,279 --> 00:31:39,360

getting closer to being

912

00:31:36,960 --> 00:31:41,840

less

913

00:31:39,360 --> 00:31:43,600

dependable on the Single Farm Payment.

914

00:31:41,840 --> 00:31:45,120

It's coming up to almost 10 years

915

00:31:43,600 --> 00:31:46,720

since you were on the Academy, and looking

916

00:31:45,120 --> 00:31:48,799

at the business now, and we're looking

917

00:31:46,720 --> 00:31:50,320

down the valley and we can see the poultry

918

00:31:48,799 --> 00:31:52,960

units in the distance.

919

00:31:50,320 --> 00:31:54,559

It's unrecognisable, the progress you've

920

00:31:52,960 --> 00:31:56,240

made, and on behalf of Jim and I and

921

00:31:54,559 --> 00:31:58,080

everybody in Farming Connect, I just want to

922

00:31:56,240 --> 00:31:59,840

thank you for the welcome, congratulate

923

00:31:58,080 --> 00:32:01,519

you on everything you’ve achieved, and wish

924

00:31:59,840 --> 00:32:03,919

you and the family all the very best for

925

00:32:01,519 --> 00:32:03,919

the future.

926

00:32:06,240 --> 00:32:09,840

If you would like more information about

927

00:32:08,000 --> 00:32:12,320

the support available through Farming

928

00:32:09,840 --> 00:32:14,159

Connect, then please contact your local

929

00:32:12,320 --> 00:32:18,640

development officer or the Service

930

00:32:14,159 --> 00:32:19,679

Centre on 08456 000 813.

931

00:32:18,640 --> 00:32:21,440

932

00:32:19,679 --> 00:32:24,080

And there we are, we've reached the end

933

00:32:21,440 --> 00:32:26,080

of yet another episode. We'll be back in

934

00:32:24,080 --> 00:32:28,320

two weeks’ time with plenty more to talk

935

00:32:26,080 --> 00:32:30,480

about, but in the meantime, don't forget

936

00:32:28,320 --> 00:32:32,880

to hit ‘subscribe’ on whichever platform

937

00:32:30,480 --> 00:32:35,360

you use to keep notified of all new

938

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

episodes of Ear to the Ground.

939

00:32:35,360 --> 00:32:39,360

On behalf of the team at Farming

940

00:32:37,120 --> 00:32:41,039

Connect and myself, Aled Jones, thank you

941

00:32:39,360 --> 00:32:43,840

for listening and goodbye for now.

942

00:32:41,039 --> 00:32:43,840

[Music]

943

00:32:44,320 --> 00:32:57,640

[Music]

944

00:32:45,660 --> 00:32:57,640

[Music]

945

00:33:00,320 --> 00:33:02,399

[Music]