

FARMPLAN BUSINESS



2012 FarmPlanner Competition

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IAgrM FARM PLANNER OF THE YEAR 2012 Briefing Notes

Please find listed below the Briefing Notes covering the 2012 IAgrM FarmPlanner Competition that will be taking place at the Farley Farms Estate thanks to the kind permission of Lord Berstead and Mark Robins the Estate Manager.

The Competition is once again sponsored by Farmplan Computer Systems, Farmers Weekly and this year also by Marks & Spencer.

The Estate:

**Farley Farms and Estate, The Estate Office, Farley Hall, Castle Road,
Farley Hill, Berkshire RG7 1UL**

The Farley Farms Estate, centred around Farley Hall, a grade 1 listed Georgian house, is situated in the heart of Berkshire a few miles south of Reading. The Estate extends to 1,750 acres of mixed farmland bordered on three sides by tributaries of the River Thames (the Whitewater, Blackwater and Loddon). The Estate has a number of businesses including a traditional working farm, let grassland, woodland, a luxury livery development, a private & modest commercial shoot, plus a range of private & residential let houses and let commercial properties.

Farley Hall is the country home of Lord & Lady Bearsted.

History

The Hall together with 150 acres was purchased by the Samuel family in 1952, and has been built up over the last fifty years by the purchase of the surrounding farms as they came available. With the changes in farming over time, particularly with the financial pressures in recent years, the majority of the original farm sites are now considered unsuitable for farming use. Substantial development & inward investment has taken place in the last few years.

Farley Hall was built in 1729 by Mr Walters, who was probably related to the Mr Walters who founded the Times newspaper later that century, and who lived three miles away at Bear Wood. The ownership records have been lost over the years until the middle of the last century. The current owner (or rather his father) bought the house together with 150 acres in 1952. Since then the following land and farms have been purchased.

(NB that the dates and acreage are approximate.)

Property	Date	Size (acres)	Details
Farley Hall	1952	150	Grade I house, service cottages, & adjacent land, over half woodland
Farley Court land	1956	90	Woodland
Clarks Farm	1959	120	Dairy farm; 60 cows
Wheelers Farm	1959	120	Dairy farm; 60 cows
Tanners Farm	1962	200	Arable farm
Bridge Farm	1962	200	Dairy farm 120 cows
Swallowfield Park land	1965	500	Grazing and arable farms, Dovecote Farm and Rowes Farm
Whites Farm	1975	250	Arable farm
Sandpit Lane	1985	60	Arable land
Great Copse / Kiln Copse	1995	45	Woodland

Many of the old, larger, high maintenance farmhouses have been sold off, as they were unsuitable for farm labour. The two smaller dairies were closed and the herds moved to a new purpose built dairy at Tanners Dairy during the 1960s. Later Bridge Farm dairy was closed and the whole of the dairy operation was concentrated on the Tanners site. In 1998 the 30-year-old design was replaced by a new custom dairy unit, which now provides a modern facility which has been upgraded & added to since being built. A new detached house with a pair of garages & office was completed on the site in January 2011. Commercial letting of converted farm buildings at Bridge Farm started in 1986 with the site being developed substantially since then. New industrial buildings were erected on the site in 2006 (Unit K) & 2008 (Unit L) for existing tenants expanding their operations. The grain store was built on the site ready for harvest 2008. 'The Granary' barn conversion was completed in October 2010 & let in March 2011. The Rowes Farm site was converted into a livery yard, the yard became operational & opened to clients in February 2010.

Mission Statement/Objectives

An Estate Development Plan was written by Lord Bearsted & the Estate Manager in 2004 & presented to the Local Planning Authority. The plan was updated in November 2010 & the plan was agreed with Partners & Trustees in January 2011.

The Partners of Farley Farms have agreed the following objectives for the business.

A Robust, Diverse, Sustainable business *delivering*

- Asset growth *to ensure*
 - Income generation *for*
 - Re-investment *offering*
 - Present & future benefit to the owners

The Estate Farming Business

Farley Farms is a family farming partnership with two main farming enterprises, dairy and arable. The Farms are also part of Countryside Stewardship Scheme, an Entry Level Scheme & various Woodland Grant Schemes. An 18 stable livery yard offers access to clients to the farm for private cross country riding.

The Estate operates a private & commercial shoot, with commercial & residential properties for rent.

- **Dairy key facts:**
 - Manager and management are provided by Velcourt Ltd.
 - 180 pedigree Holstein Friesian
 - All year round calving
 - Cubicle & Loose housed in winter
 - Rotational graze throughout grazing season
 - Premium (M&S) liquid milk contract
 - Youngstock contract reared

- **Arable key facts:**
 - Managed and operated by J L Bryce Farms Ltd, a local farmer
 - Traditional rotation mix of milling wheat with break crops of oilseed rape & linseed
 - 2,000t on floor grain store

- **Livery key facts:**
 - Full livery
 - 18 stables
 - Clubhouse for use by clients
 - 5 point horse walker
 - Outdoor (85m x 30m) manége
 - Planning permission granted for a 60m x 30m indoor riding school
 - Cross country hacking

- **Shoot key facts:**
 - 9,500 pheasant & 3,500 partridge put down
 - Home reared & poults bought in
 - 9 private shoots
 - 19 let days, including 5 walk up days
 - Bags from 100 to 400 birds
 - Mixed terrain shooting across open fields, hills & ancient woodland with up to 25 drives

- **Rental key facts:**
 - 62,700 ft² in 17 various facilities of mixed office, warehouse & storage commercial let buildings let to 16 tenants on a range of leases
 - 500t of grain storage let to University of Reading
 - 13 residential let houses subject to various AST & tenancy agreements
 - 440 acres of let grassland including parkland & river meadows

- **Environmental key facts:**
 - Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS) due to expire in 2013
 - Entry Level Scheme due to expire in 2012
 - Various Woodland Grant Schemes in place across the 350 acres of woodland
 - CFE plots

Cropping - 2012 acres

	Acres	Hectors
Winter wheat	365	146
Winter linseed	143	57
Maize	130	52
Grass	606	242
ELS/ CFE	7	3
Game strips	50	20
Horse paddocks	57	23
Stewardship Margins	42	17
Woodland	350	140
Totals	1,750	700

Staffing

The Estate is managed by a full time, resident Estate Manager reporting to Lord Bearsted & supported by a PA & part time book-keeper.

- **Dairy:**
 - Trainee Manager
 - Herdsman
 - Assistant
- **Livery Yard:**
 - Manager
 - Manager's Assistant
 - Yard Assistant
 - Apprentice Grooms (2)
- **Shoot:**
 - Head Keeper
 - Keeper's Assistant
 - Apprentice
- **Gardens & Grounds:**
 - Head Gardener
 - Assistant Head Gardener
 - Gardener
 - Estate Worker
 - Garden Apprentice/Trainee

Financial Information:

Further information will be provided to those registering before and at the Estate visit on the 13th March 2012

The questions to be addressed are:

- 1) Given that the owner has a desire to retain the dairy unit', what opportunities does he have for its future management and development?
- 2) What options has the Farm and Estate for maximising the conservation and environment development whilst benefiting the whole business?
- 3) Given the wide range of activities on the farm and estate, what further options do they have and how can they develop the 'Farley' brand?
- 4) What options do they have for added value food- related production businesses?
- 5) They have within the estate two redundant sites (a farm yard along with buildings and an old grain storage complex). What opportunities do they have for these sites?
- 6) Suggestions for opportunities for an enterprise (profitable) that will exploit the relatively large amount of grazing rather than renting large blocks of land out to a grazier.

(The above questions can be addressed separately or grouped together)

Timetable;

- 1) Confirmation of teams entering required by the end of January 2012
- 2) Further details of the Farm and Estate relevant to the 5 questions being asked will be sent to those who have confirmed they will be entering teams by the beginning of February.
- 3) Farm and Estate visit will take place on Tuesday 13th March 2012
- 4) Entries to be submitted by (date to be confirmed at the farm visit)
- 5) First judging round (date to be confirmed at the farm visit)
- 6) Finalist notified by (date to be confirmed at the farm visit)
- 7) Finals of competition (date to be confirmed at the farm visit)

To register for the 2012 FarmPlanner competition or for further information please contact IAgRM as soon as possible by:

- Email: richard@iagrm.com
- Post: IAgRM, Portbury House, Sheepway, Portbury, Bristol BS20 7TE
- Telephone: 01275 843825 Fax: 01275 374747

This competition is sponsored and supported by:

Farmplan Computer Systems, Farmers Weekly and Marks & Spencer.