



Farmplanner of The Year 2009

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All organisations wishing to take part must have registered and confirmed numbers by Thursday 29th January 2009 to the Institute of Agricultural Management.

The overall aim of the Farmplanner competition remains as it has for many years which is to promote the role of all aspects of planning in modern farm management. Clearly in these changing times for British agriculture there is a chance to look at new options and consider afresh old established practices.

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For the 2009 competition we are very fortunate that Overbury Farms Estate near Tewkesbury which is a sheep and arable farm have agreed to be our case study. It is a progressive business and is involved with the LEAF Marque and FWAG. It like many farming business faces a number of challenges and choices within the environment it operates. Some of these as you will see have been chosen to be talked by those entering this years competition.

**Briefing Notes to accompany the farm visit to Overbury Farms,
Worcestershire**

Overbury Farms

Overbury Farms is the principal tenant farm on the Overbury Estate. Overbury Estate has been in the Holland-Martin family since 1723. The tenanted land extends to 1538 Ha.

Overbury Farms Mission Statement

Overbury Farms has a long tradition of excellence and quality generated through innovative ideas. A profitable farming business is required to allow re-investment in the estate infrastructure and to provide income for the owner. Our aim is to maintain those standards and improve where ever possible. These standards must be extended to include, our employees, our customers, our suppliers, our environment and the visitors and tenants of the farm and estate.

The farm team must work together with neighbouring farmers, the game department, the estate, forestry and builders.

The business should be forward looking, investing in modern procedures and machinery, whilst having a thought and consideration for its history and family roots. It should develop, alternative funding and diversification to reduce the impact of challenging commodity changes whilst maintaining and improving the stewardship of the land and buildings it utilises.

The Assignment

- 1) Using the resources available, develop a strategy for a modern agri-business to continue as a commodity producer, whilst maintaining its environmental credentials.
- 2) The farm wants to increase the links between the general public and the farmed environment. How can this be achieved and at what cost?
- 3) In order to maximise the returns from Environmental Stewardship after the removal of SFP in 2012, what options should the farm investigate and what benefits to the local environment might this produce?
- 4) What are the opportunities within the farming system for renewable energy production and how would that impact on the way the farm is viewed in the local community.
- 5) What can the Agricultural Industry do to stop being so lamely supported by Government and what can we do to get them to understand and bring rural agri-business' and the rural economy to the forefront of the political agenda?

The Farming Operation

The farms are managed as one unit and lie within a ring fence rising from 100 to 1000 ft (305m) on the summit of Bredon Hill. The hill land is typical Cotswold Limestone Brash (Aberford and Elmton series), and the vale land varies from lias clay (Evesham series), to medium sandy loam over sand (Badsey series). The farm has 5 Environment Agency water abstraction licences allowing irrigation over 260Ha of farmland.

The annual rainfall is 650mm (26inches).

Cropping 2009	Market	Total Ha's
Winter Wheat	Milling/Feed/Seed	513
Winter Barley	Malting	63
Winter Oilseed Rape	Edible Oil	60
Winter Beans	Seed/Animal Feed	140
Spring Barley	Malting	144
Fallow		62
Salad Onions	Fresh Market	28
Picking Peas	Fresh Market	86
Potatoes	Fresh Market	25
Fodder Crops	Sheep	10
Set Aside	Permanent	33
Leys	Silage (Sheep/Horses)	57
Permanent Pasture	Sheep/Horse Grazing	207
Game Cover	Shooting	35
CSS and ELS	Field Margins/Arable Reversion	67
Farm Woodland	Wildlife	8
		<u>1538Ha</u>

Staff

The staff includes:

- 1 full time manager
- 1 mechanic/sprayer/combine driver
- 1 shepherd
- 4 Tractor Drivers
- $\frac{1}{2}$ office administration

Livestock

1000 Ewes and 250 Ewe Lambs - The Mules are crossed with Suffolk, and Texel, both breeds are EBV rated rams. Half of the annual replacements are retained Mule crossed Texels, the other half are bought in. Lamb is marketed deadweight through the May Hill Sheep Group and is sold to Sainsbury's. Over 200 lambs are sold annually through the Estate Office to local food outlets and private individuals.

Machinery

John Deere Tractors: - 7830-Autotractor (190hp), 6930-Autotractor (160hp), 6410 (120hp), 6400 (120hp) and a CASE MX135 (135hp)

JCB telescopic handler and 428 Backhoe/Loader

John Deere STS 690 Combine (9m header, chaff spreader and straw chopper) Auto-tractor,

4m Simba-Horsch C04 Drill

Simba/Vaderstad cultivation equipment including 6.5m Carrier

Bateman RB35 (36m) and Chaviot 2000, 24m pesticide and liquid Fertiliser application.

Alvin Blanch 30K drier with grain handling including 7,380t's grain storage.

Farm SOYL mapped for variable rate fertiliser application.

Conservation

The farm signed a 10 year Countryside Stewardship scheme in 2000 and a 5 year Entry Level Stewardship Scheme in 2005. Options include overwinter stubbles followed by spring cropping, 2m, 4m and 6m buffer strip's and areas of land managed for Lapwing habitat. Special species identified on the farm include, Brown Hare, Barn Owl, Skylark, Tree Sparrow, Lapwing, Yellow Hammer, Reed Bunting and Linnets.

Buildings

The main site for arable operations is Middle Barn Farm. There is grain storage here for 5,600 tonnes in bulk (4 stores) and 1780t in bin storage. (40 bins). The sheep unit is located at Park Farm located towards the top of Bredon Hill at 800ft. There is indoor housing for 700 ewes. The old dairy is situated at Court Farm, where there are disused cattle housing facilities and some forage stores. The dairy was dispersed in 1995. There are a further 7 stone barns within the farm tenancy.

Other Points

The financial year runs from the 1st April each year.

The farm is a member and supporter of LEAF and was awarded the LEAF Marque in June 2007. The farm also supports the work of FWAG in the county. The farm is inspected annually for FABBL, Combinable Crops and LEAF Marque.

A family pheasant and partridge shoot employs 2.5 game keepers. We aim to hatch and rear all of our own stock. New rearing houses were built in 2006 and 2007. On average 18 outside shoot days need to be sold to help fund the shooting requirements. 35Ha of game covers and rough ground are used to hold and feed the birds. These game covers include, maize, millet, sorghum and mustard.

Financial Information

Detailed financial information can be obtained by application to the office. (email)