



Dairy Science Forum visit notes – Tyers Hall Farm

1st November 2023

Jimmy's father bought Tyers Hall Farm at auction in 1973, this is a modern farm planted on an ancient site!



Over the years, a lot of improvements have been made but there are still plenty more to do!

There used to be a big pig operation at Longley Farm but the pigs were moved to Tyers Hall, the cows were bolted on and an arable operation developed (now growing herbal leys, fodder beet and maize).

Paul Robson has worked at Tyers Hall for 34 years! He has been on a considerable learning curve as has moved over to manage the dairy cows from managing pigs. Dry sows = dry cows and farrowing sows = milk cows!

Using Datamars collars (through Semex), fertility has gone up and calving interval has come down. Kite provide support to the farm. Aim is to manage the land with hooves, not diesel!



Milking in a 12:12 herringbone, sending all milk to Longley Farm. Yield is currently 5,000 litres per lactation at 6% butterfat, 4.1% protein. The aim is to increase volume and reduce butterfat. 147 pedigree Jersey (used to be a mixed Jersey/Guernsey herd, now all Jersey) cows in milk at time of our visit. All cows graze through the summer and are fed a PMR mix in the winter, cows are fed to yield in the parlour. They grow all their own bedding. All cows are on straw yards as part of a regenerative approach to soil management and in line with public expectations.



The farm is 900 acres (owned and rented) and there are about 350 acres for grazing, the rest is cereals. Wouldn't advise chicory in a herbal ley, it gets bitter and less palatable if not eaten when young.



Tyers Hall is over halfway in moving from its original 10% unfarmed area to its target of 20%. There is an area of wet woodland and ask the question ‘how do we make the fields more sensible to farm?’ There is a footpath running right through the middle of the farm so have diverted the footpath “to control the wrong kind of people and encourage the right kind of people”.

Maize yields about 17.5t/acre and OSR about 1.5-1.75t/acre, low rainfall farm.



Longley Farm

2nd November 2023

Jimmy's family were left Longley Farm by Great Uncle Jonas in 1948, it comprised 30 acres, a horse, 10 cows and a bank overdraft!



Upper and Lower Longley Farm became part of the farm in 1954 with the aim of growing grass and feeding cows. By 1962, they had a 90 acre mixed farm with a flying herd.

Longley Farm began cream production in 1954, originally everything was in glass using returnable bottles and selling over a wide geography. Post war there were 100,000 farms, there were four dairy farms within quarter of a mile of Longley but now they are the only dairy farmers in the whole valley!

Cream sales were meteoric! By 1965, Longley had installed a cream separator capable of handling 440 gallons/hour of milk and had moved to machine packing into cartons. A new fridge, loading area and office were added in 1970, as well as a dam for cooling water. Although Longley was a marginal farm, within 50 miles there is a huge population! In 1970, they increased capacity to 2,500 gallons/hour and moved from cans to tankers.



Jimmy said "we've never been good on advertising, and we still aren't" but Longley Farm were the first to commercially manufacture cottage cheese.



Jimmy studied Engineering at Cambridge University and then went on to Manchester Business School. He came back to Longley Farm in 1984 and spent two years focusing on how to freeze cream. Jimmy developed a process and his target export market was Japan!



Longley also installed the UK's first commercial wind powered turbine in 1985 and frozen cream was first sold into Japan in 1985 in 50kg boxes!

Branded Le Cottage Cheese to France in 1986/87, Tokyo, Japan – 1987 and Taipei, Taiwan in 1991. Generally, the UK is relatively safe, not corrupt but once you leave these shores, things are a little different!

Jersey products were launched in 1996, Longley Jersey and Longley Farm were the first people in the UK to make cylindrical butter in this industry. Jimmy realised that the British market is too small, even for a business of Longley Farm's size and therefore saw their future as multi-national. In 1996, Jimmy took over Longley Farm and set up businesses in Estonia and Australia.

Jimmy entered a Joint Venture in NSW in 1997 with a view to transferring most UK production of frozen cream to Australia. At the time, Longley was the UK's largest deep sea exporter of frozen food, but worries about Chernobyl, Foot & Mouth & BSE had gradually generated quite a lot of buyer scepticism about the quality of UK milk. By 1996, the dairy factory was fully owned and called Richmond Dairies, along with a 140 Ha farm with its own herd of 50 pedigree Red Polls. Apart from its freezing technology, Richmond was the only powder drier between Cape York and Sydney.

Technology: Reverse osmosis in 1979, ultra filtration in 1983/1984, has an AD plant in Australia, Chris Sharp runs Australia, Jimmy hasn't been over for 10yrs! The milk supply in Australia is drying up.



In 2007 – Campo Longley, Uruguay – selling milk to a farmers co-op

2010 – 320 Ha, 310 jersey cows

2023 – 320 Ha, 310 jersey cows

British is good in Uruguay!

75th Anniversary of Longley Farm! Over this time, the management team has only been three people: Jimmy, his father and his uncle – continuity for 75 years. Jimmy believes a key to success of the business is “no boardroom discussions! There are no shareholders.”

Longley Farm refuses to do ‘own label’ – “its our product, like it or not!”

Every other day collection for all milk, they call it ‘skip a day’ in Australia.



Longley Farm just presented some long service award to their staff and time served amounted to over 1,000 years! There are 120 employees at Longley Farm.

Farmer suppliers have their own antibiotic tests, every collection is tested and it is a free service to the farmers. Every farm is antibiotic tested once per week.

Longley Farm operates a one price for all.

Fresh produce is held in overnight (but because of its nature is fairly short shelf-life), cottage cheese for 48hrs and the system is production-end controlled.



4% BF milk = cream is 40%

Double cream is 48% minimum

Single cream is 18% minimum

Whipping cream is 40% minimum

Jersey 3:1 cream:milk

Cottage cheese 3:1

Yogurt 1.3:1



Longley Farm are not about marketing and advertising, its all about product quality, cost of production and the use of technology. The aim is to never produce anything here that can be imported. Longley Farm will never, ever make hard cheese.



The main fuel supply is gas. Steam demand in the dairy is very variable and is quite tricky to manage. Seven years ago there was a coal boiler, which was almost uncontrollable and had to run flat out all the time.

The new boilers are oversized and act as accumulators and build a steam store, so that there is always extra steam ready to go, when required.

Longley Farm manufactures 364 days per year and is a “no management, management business!” This day’s milk must be processed today!





Many thanks from the Dairy Science Forum to Jimmy and his amazing Longley Farm & Tyers Hall teams, we all had the best visit and learnt such a lot!