

Partnership

Henry Morgan & Gareth Williams

Fardre Farm, Abergele, Conwy



July 2011



Background

Fardre Farm, Abergele, is a specialist dairy farm and the home of Henry Morgan and his wife. In January 2009, with no succession plan in place, the couple entered into a partnership agreement with Gareth Williams for the management of the farm.

Fardre is a 470 acre farm with 340 spring calving Friesian/Jersey Crossbreds producing 4,500 litres, 120 bulling heifers and 140 heifer calves. The farm sells its milk to Glanbia.

The main aim of the business is to provide enough income for all parties and to look at opportunities for growth.

Until January 2009, Henry and his family had been unsure what they wanted to do with the business. "I wasn't sure what was going to happen in the future but I knew I didn't want to sell the farm," Henry explains. "I wanted to take some of the pressure off me but still wanted to continue dairy farming."

Gareth had been a relief milker at Fardre Farm before he left to work on another farm. It was on

this farm that he saw a partnership concept in practice. When Gareth and Henry discussed this, Henry admitted he would be keen to follow this route if the opportunity arose.

How it started

Three years after this initial discussion, Henry contacted Gareth to offer him the opportunity to farm in partnership. It was agreed that the partnership would be for an initial period of 12 months to make certain both parties were happy with the situation. On January 1st 2009, Morgan and Williams LLP, was established.



The partnership gave Henry an opportunity to remain in business and to generate a pension for his retirement while it allowed Gareth the chance to develop from a relief milker to managing his own cows.

"I want to be managing farms rather than cows when I'm 40 years old and this partnership allows me to gain the skills I need to do that," says Gareth.



Cronfa Amaethyddol Ewrop ar gyfer Datblygu Gwledig: Ewrop yn Buddsoddi mewn Ardaloedd Gwledig
The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe Investing in Rural Areas



Canolfan Datblygu Llaeth
Dairy Development Centre

DairyCo



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

The current situation

Gareth owns 34% of the business and Henry and his family own the remainder. Gareth manages the cows while Henry has responsibility for the reseeds and the contractor work. Each partner receives a wage and any business surplus is divided after the end of each financial year, with Gareth receiving the majority.

The venture has proved to be precisely what both parties had expected. The key message from both is that it is essential to have an open-minded attitude. Henry says good communication is vital also.

“Being given the opportunity to make your own mistakes and learning from it has been valuable,” Gareth admits. Henry says if a problem arises there is another person to share ideas with.

Through developing this business, both parties have been made aware of opportunities for possible progression to the next stage, either collectively or as individuals.



Henry and Gareth agree that having already proved the benefits of a partnership approach they would be open to any opportunities that come their way in future.



Key areas for success

Gareth and Henry feel there are a number of reasons for the success of the venture:

- Responsibility is shared between both parties; good communication is essential.
- The business offered an opportunity for someone to grow their expertise and retain knowledge within the sector.
- Provides a better work life balance for both parties through a simple system.
- Offers a positive solution to succession issues.

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