

ON MY FARM Robert Lanning, Devonshire Poultry

This month, Robert Lanning muses on farm innovations found at fairs and conferences through spring

I am writing this fresh back from the Pig & Poultry Fair at Stoneleigh. As always it was very well attended and full of enthusiasm. Walking around, there were lots of old ideas with "new paint" on, but among these I did notice there were a few new and exciting things on the market.

Particularly interesting this year was the biomass area. Having just sorted our IPPC permit on one of our farms for biomass, we have made the decision not to install a system but will instead use indirect gas heating, because of poorer returns on offer following the recent RHI reductions. That said, we are just completing a costing model to install a wood gasification and CHP



Robert Lanning is considering a myriad of new technology for his farm business

Engine. If the figures add up we will be producing in excess of 50% of our own energy, but, just like the biomass it is very much grant dependant.

As chairman, I can report the South West Chicken Association Conference was a huge success, with record numbers to the pre-conference dinner and the conference. We had organised some fantastic speak-

ers, in particular Susan Watkins who came over from the US to give a paper on water quality. Just when I thought we were doing enough, I realise we can do more. Now we are not using antibiotics, I want to flush the drinker lines regularly in the first week. The good news is apart from time there is no cost involved and I think this will help bring down our bacteria counts. I am sure drinker

manufacturers could soon design an automated flushing system which would simplify this further.

All our chicks are now receiving a probiotic before leaving the hatchery, the reasons and principles are definitely correct. However, I am keen to see if the additional cost gives the required return in welfare and performance. By that I mean better gut health leading to better litter and reduced FCR.

It was fantastic to see the framework of our new buildings at Chafcombe, Chard, on the front page of last month's Poultry World. They are nearing completion with the concrete floors being poured at the end of May. We have gone for high insulation values and low energy use. It is the first time for us using LED lighting; the energy savings are certainly there, and installation costs are less. My biggest concern is that any savings will soon be lost if the reliability isn't there.

Devonshire Poultry comprises six farms in Devon, Dorset and Somerset, growing 3.5 million chickens a year for a leading integrator.

Soapbox James Hook, Aled Griffiths, Myles Thomas

Stronger staying in the EU

Three leading lights make the case for remaining in Europe for the poultry industry

The poultry sector is closer to the market than some others, much less reliant on direct payments and particularly subject to regulation.

So it's not surprising that many poultry and egg producers' first instinct is to believe there could be a better future outside the EU. They should think again.

Much of the excessive animal welfare pressure is home-grown. Many of the EU Regulations and Directives that poultry farms complain about started life in Britain – Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) and the Welfare of Laying Hens Directive both emanated from within the UK government.

Look at how government buckled on the chicken meat welfare code due to animal welfare NGO lobbying. Those who believe that being outside the EU would mean less legislation should bear in mind that it is highly unlikely that any UK government would repeal existing legislation, particularly designed to protect

consumers and animal welfare.

Above all, poultry farmers often imagine they are an unsupported sector. While this is true in terms of direct support, they are in fact strongly supported by tariffs placed on imports from outside Europe and until recently, export subsidies applied to EU product sold on to the world market.

The average import tariff applied for poultry meat imports to the EU is 15.7%. While it is fact that the EU has negotiated special concessions for countries like Brazil and Thailand to import poultry meat at zero duty, effectively allowing cheaper imports on to our market, it is worth flagging that the UK is the largest beneficiary of this policy. UK importers took up 33% of the available duty free quota in 2014.

It is clear that our importers value very highly access to cheap poultry meat produced beyond our borders. Let's also not forget that our egg industry is protected by

import tariffs, protecting us from large volumes of eggs and egg products produced in systems of production now banned in the UK and Europe.

Michael Gove and other politicians in favour of Brexit have argued we could trade more freely with the rest of the world, bringing lower food prices for our consumers. They argue that we could negotiate new trade agreements on our own. However, take note how long this would take, and with 65 million consumers, we are simply not as attractive compared with the 500 million consumers we are as part of the EU.

Remember also, that in negotiating trade deals, there has to be give and take. As a developed country we can "give" banking, telecommunications, and other services, but would need to "take" and, in trying to agree a deal with developing countries, these would be agricultural products.

A vote to leave would likely increase the costs of conducting business, pushing up prices to consumers. In an effort to mitigate this, government would seek Free Trade Agreements by removing import tariffs, with countries which simply do not have our high standards and it is our own poultry farmers who would suffer. The NFU-commissioned study on the impact of leaving the EU found that even a 50% cut in tariffs would open our market even further to imports from around the world and reduce net poultry income by about £32,000 per farm per year.

Those whose livelihoods depend on the poultry sector may wish to bear the above in mind before they cast their vote on 23 June.

James Hook, Hook 2 Sisters
Aled Griffiths OBE, Oaklands Farm Eggs
Myles Thomas, British Free Range Egg Producers' Association

EVENTS

5 June
Open Farm Sunday
Contact: Annabel Shackleton
Tel: 024 7641 3911
Email: openfarmsunday@leafuk.org

7 June
Wales and West Poultry Group
Three Counties Hotel, Hereford
Tel: 01981 241 320
Email: hereford@mpvets.co.uk

8 June
British Turkey/Poultry Golf Day
Belton Woods, Grantham, Lincolnshire
Contact: Roger Cooke
Tel: 07584 059 678
Email: accounts@butterflypoultry.co.uk

13 June
Temperton Fellowship Report
The Farmers Club, London
Contact: Adreen Hart-Rule
Tel: 01952 815 428
Email: ahart-rule@harper-adams.ac.uk

15 June
Yorkshire Egg Producers Discussion Group
Burn Hall, Huby, York
Contact: Harry Atkinson
Tel: 07557 159 341
Email: harry@thompsons-feeds.co.uk

16 June
Midlands Free Range Discussion Group
Albright Hussey Manor, Shrewsbury
Contact: Stuart Hinchly
Tel: 07917 396 765
Email: stuart.hinchly@forfarmers.eu

20-22 June
VIV Europe
Utrecht, Netherlands
Contact: Ruwan Berculo
Tel: +31 30 295 2879
Email: ruwan.berculo@vnuexhibitions.com

6 July
Severn Valley Poultry Discussion Group
The Chase Hotel, Ross-on-Wye
Contact: Charles Macleod
Tel: 07850 375 731
Email: charlesmacleod@humphreypullets.com

If you run an open event relevant to the poultry industry, you can list it here for free. Call 020 8652 4927 or email poultry.world@rbi.co.uk

15 September
The Lancashire Poultry Club
Oak Royal Golf Club, Bury Lane, Chorley
Contact: Jonathon Mason
Tel: 07714 729 697
Email: thelancashirepoultryclub@hotmail.co.uk

18-22 September
International Egg Commission conference
Shangri-La Hotel, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Contact: Cassy Price
Tel: 020 7490 3493
Email: cassy@internationalegg

20 September
Poultry Meat Conference
Daventry Court Hotel, Northamptonshire
Contact: Carole Arnold
Tel: 07801 338 009
Email: carole.arnold@clara.co.uk

22 September
Midlands Free Range Discussion Group
Albright Hussey Manor, Shrewsbury
Contact: Stuart Hinchly
Tel: 07917 396 765
Email: stuart.hinchly@forfarmers.eu

17 October
Norfolk and Suffolk Poultry Association
Park Hotel, Diss
Contact: Claire Knott
Tel: 01953 455 454
Email: cknott@crowshall.co.uk

19 October
Severn Valley Poultry Discussion Group
The Chase Hotel, Ross-on-Wye
Contact: Charles Macleod
Tel: 07850 375 731
Email: charlesmacleod@humphreypullets.com

20 October
The Lancashire Poultry Club
Oak Royal Golf Club, Bury Lane, Chorley
Contact: Jonathon Mason
Tel: 07714 729 697
Email: thelancashirepoultryclub@hotmail.co.uk

6-7 November
EPIC
The Celtic Manor, South Wales
Web: www.epiconference.co.uk

online @ fwi.co.uk

Keep up to date with poultry news during June by visiting www.fwi.co.uk/poultry



Things to look out for online in June

The Feathered Forager blog is now mobile friendly. It means you can procrastinate with random poultry stories while on the move.
Our website, www.fwi.co.uk/poultry, is also optimised for use on phones or tablets – try it out for the latest poultry industry news.
Find the Poultry World team on Twitter by searching @PoultryWorld

From the Feathered Forager

www.fwi.co.uk/forager

Isis militants sell chicken eggs to make ends meet



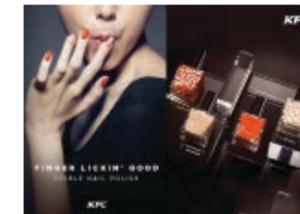
First it was suicide chickens with bombs strapped to their backs. Now it would appear error group the "so-called" Islamic State has started selling eggs to fund its nefarious deeds.

According to the Daily Star (where else?), the economic crisis has led to would-be militants lining the streets to sell eggs, in a bid to raise cash.

"When ISIS took over Sirte, they seized many properties, including farms, and some of these are very large chicken farms," according to a source.

"Relatives tell me ISIS people can now be seen standing in the streets in their black outfits with their faces covered, selling both the eggs and the chickens. And they are selling the chickens for a very cheap price of just one or two dinars."

KFC offers fried-chicken flavour nail varnish



Fried chicken chain KFC prides itself on its product being "finger lickin' good". So much so, it has been the restaurant's slogan for many years.

Now, customers in Hong Kong can relive the last time they indulged in the famous fried food and look good as well – the firm has launched edible nail varnish that tastes like either hot and spicy or classic recipe chicken.

"The recipe for our edible nail polish is unique and was specifically designed to hold the flavour, but to also dry with a glossy coat similar to normal nail polish," said a spokesperson. "This campaign is designed to be intriguing and fun to increase excitement around the KFC brand in Hong Kong."

Leicester footballers celebrate success with egg roulette

The Feathered Forager is always keen to spot a crossover from poultry news to more mainstream current affairs. So he was delighted to find Leicester City's Jamie Vardy and Christian Fuchs playing egg roulette.

In celebration of the team's recent success, here we feature the new football stars' Easter antics. It's often said fans emulate their sports heroes, so clearly there could be a marketing opportunity here.

