

From the Ground Up

Experiences of new entrant farmers across the UK

Lynbreck Croft, Cairngorms: Farming with Nature

“We are building a business based on diversification”

Featured on the BBC’s *This Farming Life*, Lynbreck Croft’s heroic embrace of a crofting lifestyle has captured the imagination of Scotland. Their commitment to “farming with nature” is more than an expression of environmental values, but also an innovation for finance-strapped new entrants. Lynbreck Croft tapped into a variety of environmental improvement funding streams, like a forestry improvement scheme available from the former Forestry Commission Scotland, to provide income during the crucial start-up phase of their burgeoning Highland croft. Moreover, these ecological improvements like the planting of wind breaks and upland restoration will improve the overall quality of what was previously marginal land at the outset.



Photo: Sandra Angers-Blondin

Scottish Goat Meat Company, Banffshire: From Waste to Niche

“The low production costs of buying in day old goats allows us to lower the pricing of the end product”

After years of hard work pursuing a dream of 100% full-time farm career, the Scottish Goat Meat Company realised how a waste product could be the key to their success. In Scotland, male goats are routinely euthanised, as they are seen to be without value to the common goat milk farms and market pathways.

However, by creating novel markets for goat meat, the farm was able to grow a profitable herd of hardy animals. The business model relies on the changing of consumers tastes, preferences and norms through consumer engagement at farmers markets, local butchers, and trade shows. Once this barrier is overcome a whole range of novel products, and thus agricultural outcomes, can be realised.





Tap O' Noth Farm, Aberdeenshire: Markets from Scratch

"It's obvious there is quite a bit wrong with the way our food is grown. We want to be part of the answer instead of part of the problem."

After many years searching for land, Tap o' Noth Farm was finally established near the town of Rhynie. The problem was, there was no simple access to markets for the small-scale and diversified products the farm was producing. Originally established as site for agri-education, Tap o'Noth Farm built upon previous design skills to communicate with the local community about the quality of their

product and the mission of their farm. It became clear that there was a demand for a freshly-picked Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) veg box scheme. Delivering within a 15-mile radius, Tap o'Noth Farm provides fresh vegetables and eggs to 50 members, and plans to expand as their customer base undoubtedly grows.



North Aston Dairy, Oxfordshire: Community Financed Agriculture

"What I enjoy the most is growing grass to catch the sun's energy and turning that into a delicious product"

This micro dairy possesses an unconventional asset: a community of involved customers that are invested in the success of the business. Customers of North Aston's milk, yogurt and ice cream are so devoted, they invest ahead of time in a Community Supported Agriculture model. When the farm has taken on a new capital expense, the customers have provided North Aston with low interest loans. These loans are offered at rates superior to local savings accounts providing positive returns for investors. The customers also purchase the value-added products produced on site, like the cured cuts of retired heifers. North Aston's key concern is deciding how to grow their business to meet their demand.



The goal of the **NEWBIE** network is to increase innovation, entrepreneurship, and resilience in the European farming sector by enabling new entrants to successfully establish sustainable farm businesses in Europe.

New entrants across Europe face similar challenges of access to land, capital, markets, and information. But new entrant farm businesses are also a wellspring of innovation. Working within and across countries, **NEWBIE** aims to surface and support new entrant innovation by:

- Describing state of the art of new entrant business and entry models
- Developing new entrant support networks which will identify, further develop, and promote innovative business models and entry models for new entrants.
- Producing practical tools and recommendations targeted at specific stakeholder groups.

By highlighting the challenges and efforts of new entrants across Europe, **NEWBIE** encourages the resilience of the agricultural sector. Join up with **NEWBIE** to stay informed as well as shape the outcome of the project. Stay tuned for the 2019 open call for applications for the **NEWBIE** Best New Entrant Business Model of the Year Award.

Watch out for NEWBIE's sister project, the EU-funded 'NEFERTITI' - Networking European Farms to Enhance Cross Fertilisation and Innovation Uptake through Demonstration. In Scotland, the NEFERTITI project aims to support on-farm demonstration activities that encourage 'new people and new pathways' to work in Scottish agriculture. Find out more and sign-up for event information at: nefertiti-h2020.eu



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