



Struell Farm: Our Story

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Meet the Team



Our Story

Listening

Learning

Adoption

Simplicity

Continuous Improvement

Embracing Opportunities

Farm Origins

2006

- 30 acres
- 40 store-to-beef cattle

2007

- 30 acres +1st rented ground
- 33 bulling heifers

2008

- First calving season
- Additional farms rented

Farm Origins

2015

- Frank returned to farm
- Accelerated output
- Started bucket rearing AA X HOL calves
- Additional farm rented

2018

- 400 acres
 - 370 ac grass
 - 30 ac brassica
- 180 Suckler Cows
- ~80 Bucket Reared AAX Calves
- >300 AAX Beef Cattle to Finish on Grass



Why?

➤ PROFIT

Mission

- To build a resilient & profitable family farm business that is a pleasure to operate & will endure into the next generation



Bottom Line: too much work to be a hobby!!!

How

Make a Plan

Follow the Plan

Focus on Profit

- Maximise Sale Value
- Minimise Spend

Minimise Labour

Adapt the System to Suit the Farm (Dry Land)

Grass

- Cheapest Feed

Planning – SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Vet

Family Ambition

Shed Rentals

Machinery Sharing

Dry Land

Weaknesses

New Venture

Run Down Land

Proximity to Town

No Housing

Poor Field
Infrastructure

Opportunities

AA Scheme

Land Becoming
Available

Increased Grass
Growth

Threats

Security of AA
Bonus

Land Security

Brexit

Goal (2011)

The cow must pay for all investments including:

- Land Purchase
- Improvements and Capital Spend
- Expansion



...Lessons
Learned?

Cow Selection Criteria

Can be carried cheaply over the winter

Operate efficiently on a grass based production system

Good milk yield:

- 200 day weight of calf > 50% of cow weight;
- long lactation

Require minimal assistance at calving

Highly fertile

Mature cow weight of 550-650 kg

Produce progeny suited to grass based finishing system

Good temperament

Minimum 1 Bull to 40 cows

What is a Good Cow?



What is a Good Cow?



What is a Good Cow?



What is a Good Cow?

Animal Number	Color	Breed	Sex	DateOfBirth
UK 9 371989 1346 5	BLACK	ABERDEEN-ANGUS	M	09/02/2010
UK 9 371989 1428 3	BLACK	ABERDEEN-ANGUS	F	02/02/2011
UK 9 371989 1575 3	BLACK	ABERDEEN-ANGUS	M	05/03/2012
UK 9 371989 1641 6	BLACK	ABERDEEN-ANGUS	M	06/02/2013
UK 9 371989 1806 3	BLACK	ABERDEEN-ANGUS	F	12/03/2014
UK 9 371989 1826 2	BLACK	ABERDEEN-ANGUS	M	01/02/2015
UK 9 371989 1982 4	BLACK	ABERDEEN-ANGUS	M	03/02/2016
UK 9 371989 2113 2	BLACK	ABERDEEN-ANGUS	F	29/01/2017

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Replacement Heifers

- Purchased British Friesian X Aberdeen Angus
- Full vaccination programme
- High fertility
- Fixed-time AI programme
- Strict six-week breeding policy
- Calving at 30 months
- Ease of calving critical

Replacement Heifers



Sire Selection Criteria

Easy calving

Produce progeny suitable to grass based system

Good growth rate (0.54 carcass kg/day)

Minimal labour requirement

High fertility to ensure tight calving spread

Good length

Produce good quality beef

Good temperament



Breeding Goals

- 1 cow, 1 calf per year every year and no trouble
- 6-9 week calving interval
- E.g. 2017:
 - 59 day calving interval
 - ½ calved in first 2 weeks
- 2018:
 - 96% pregnancy rate
 - 67% 1st Service*
 - 25% 2nd Service
 - 8% 3rd Service

Mortality

- Calf mortality:
 - 0 – 1 day: 4%
 - 1 – 60 days: 1%
- Cow Mortality: 2%
- Target:
 - Animals sold per 100 to bull: >90%

Herd

- Breeding season
 - Commences 24th April
 - 9 weeks
 - Scan 1 @ 30 days following fixed time AI
 - Scan 2 @ ~13 weeks (24th July)
 - Remainder culled
- Allow cows to get fat over summer
- Weaning
 - December
 - Creep grazing
- Calving
 - Commences 27th January
 - All outdoors
 - Calf coats



Weanlings

- Weaned in December
- Kale & high-quality silage (12 ME; 12% Crude Protein)
- Graze by 17th March
- Fatten from August – October



Bucket Reared Calves

- Buy in September only
- Whole Milk
- Ad Lib:
 - Meal (max 3kg/day)
 - Water
 - Straw bed & feed
 - Haylage
- Full vaccination programme
- On grass from ~18th Feb



Get In Specifications

What does your buyer want?

- 280 – 330 kg carcass
- Fat Grade “3” – “4=”

ABATTOIR 2016 FIGURES:

Carcass	21 kg lighter
Age	96 days younger
Bonus	92% max bonus
	7% other bonus
Max “loss”	£84
Actual “loss”	£21
Actual “gain”	96 days less feeding!!!

Get Performing

	Weight (kg)	Fat	Grade	Age (m)	Gain (kg/d)	%inSpec	Value
All Producers	376	3=	R+	25.8	0.49	35%	
Top 10% Producers	384	3+	R+	21.3	0.60	58%	
Paul AA	297	4-	R-	18.5	0.51	98%	

Get Performing

	Weight (kg)	Fat	Grade	Age (m)	Gain (kg/d)	%inSpec	Value
All Producers	376	3=	R+	25.8	0.49	35%	~1320
Top 10% Producers	384	3+	R+	21.3	0.60	58%	~1350
Paul AA	297	4-	R-	18.5	0.51	98%	~1190

Negatives	£130 less money
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Positives	210 days less feeding
	No concentrate feeding
	Increased stocking rate
	Reduced labour
	Happy customer



Cattle Performance

- 0 – 10 mth (suckling) 1.3 – 1.4 kg LW/day
- 10 – 13 mth (1st winter) 0.6 – 0.7 kg LW/day
- 13 – 18 mth (grass) 1.0+ kg LW/day

- Lifetime Average:
 - 1.01 kg LW/day
 - 0.51 carcass

2017 Summary

	No	Sex	Age (m)	Weight (kg)	Grade	Fat	Price (£/kg)	Value (£)
Home Bred	81	M	18.4	305	54% R 46% O	42% 3 46% 4	4.09	1247
	18	F	18.6	268	50% R 50% O	17% 3 66% 4 17% 5	3.90	1056
	36	F	12	400 (live)	-	-	-	1000
Bucket Rear	26	M	22.7	320	100% O	70% 3 30% 4	3.87	1240
	18	F	22.9	287	100% O	6% 3 83% 4 11% 5	3.87	1110

Where does the performance come from?

- Herd health
- No digestive setbacks
- No shocks/stress points
- Feed to capacity all the time



Herd Health Programmes

COW HEALTH PROGRAMME

- Full vaccination
 - BVD
 - Lepto
 - Blackleg
 - Rotavac
 - Salmonella
- Complete fluke and worm programme
- Clipping ears/tails
- Minerals
 - Free access licks
 - Pre-calving bolus

CALF HEALTH PROGRAMME

- Calves castrated at birth
- Tagged at birth (BVD tags)
- Vaccinated IBR/Blackleg
- Pneumonia vaccine
- Two doses 4 weeks apart
- 4-8 weeks Coccidiosis drench
- Naturally polled

Convert Grass to Beef!

Grass	Silage	Concentrates
X	2X	4X

Industry	Tonne DM/Hectare
Dairy	7.5
Beef	4.1
Paul	12.3
Grass (Dairy)	12-18

➤ Grow More – Utilise More!

Grassland Improvement

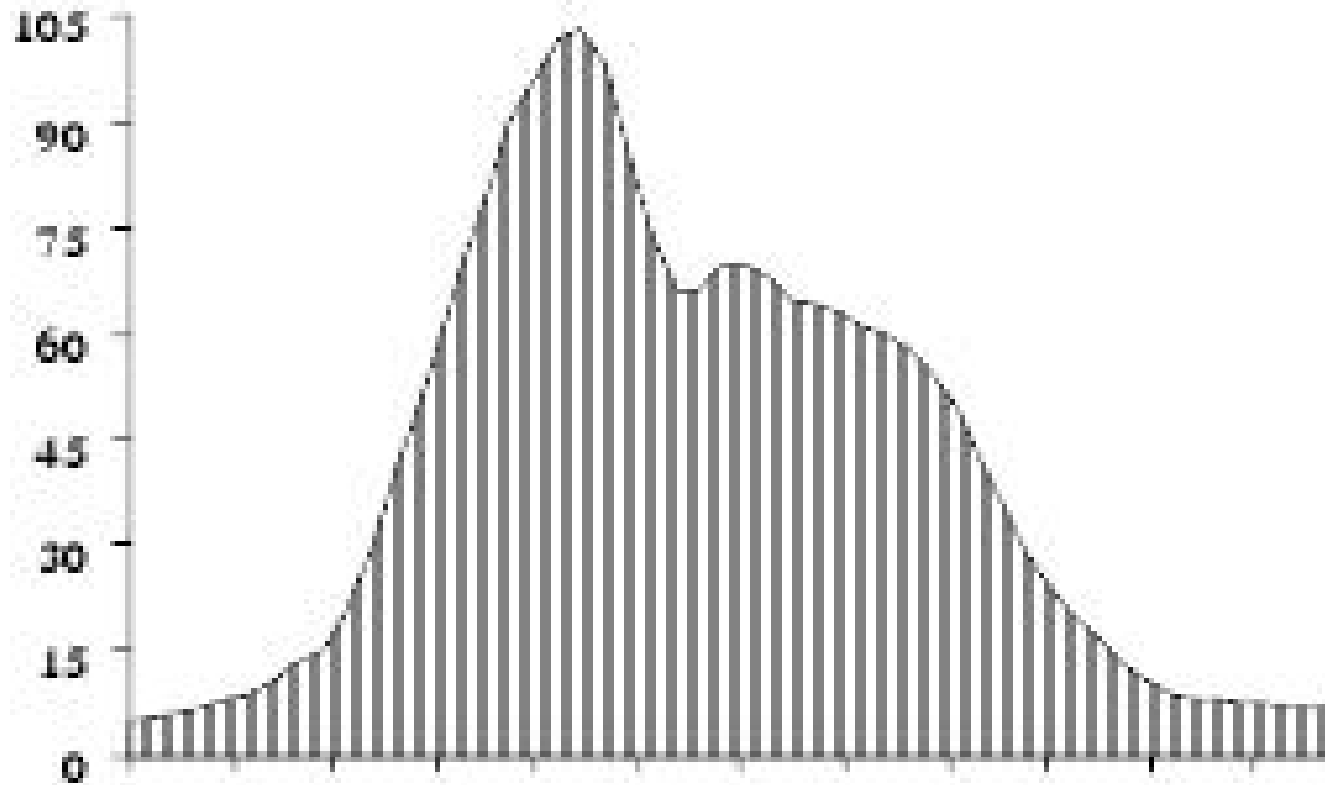
- Soil Analysis
- Lime Application
- Re-seeding
- Various methods tried
- Maximise Utilisation



Grassland Improvement...?



Yearly Grass Growth



Utilise More

Measuring

- Weather Station (Grass Check)
- Grass
 - Quantity (clip & weigh/plate meter)
 - Quality (Grass Check)
 - ME >11.7; CP >21

Allocation

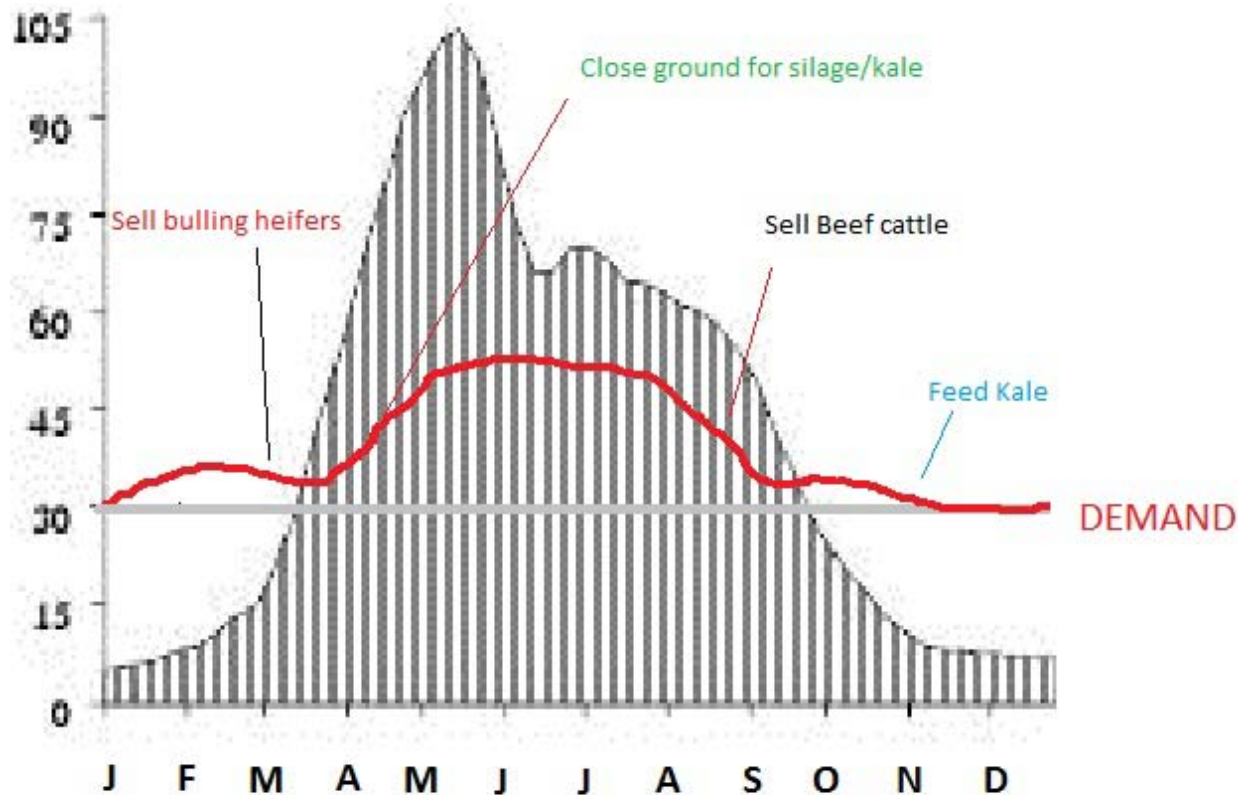
Strategic silage

- ME – 12, CP – 14

Paddocks

- Water
- Fencing

Matching Demand to Growth



- Maximum stock grazed, minimum stock wintered

Fodder Crop

- 30+ acres sown
- Main crop or hybrids
- Incorporate “dry lie”
- Bales placed in field in rows
- Strip grazed from November – February
- Cows moved off kale at night-time during calving to outdoor bedded area



Fodder Crop



Fodder Crop



Fodder Crop



Summary

1. Maximise returns from the marketplace
2. Minimise costs of production, through:
 1. Increased grass growth
 2. Increased grass utilisation





Thank you for listening