

Bottom Farm



Farmer: Duncan Farrington

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The Farrington family has been farming in Northamptonshire for four generations - managed by father and son, Robert and Duncan Farrington. Bottom Farm is an arable enterprise growing combinable crops. Additionally, it is the home of Farrington's Mellow Yellow cold pressed rapeseed oil range, giving a genuine 'field to plate' view of food production. Bottom Farm engages in several environmental measures, from tree and hedge planting, to establishment of wildflower areas. Adopting modern farming technology, whilst being sympathetic to the environment, are both key to an Integrated Farm Management approach to create a long term sustainable



The Farm

Bottom Farm is an all arable family farm running to approximately 730 acres around the village of Hargrave, Northamptonshire. Farming practises revolve around creating healthy soils, integrated with high environmental and conservation measures. The crops are grown to LEAF Marques standards, with the rapeseed being used on farm to make Farrington's cold pressed rapeseed oil.

Crops for food

A broad crop rotation of winter and spring crops are produced, including wheat, barley, rapeseed and beans. Crops are grown with an eye to local customers as we are ideally located near to several millers and end users. The farm is a member of Camgrain grain co-operative to benefit from adding value to our wheat and barley, whilst the rapeseed is used on farm for the production of cold pressed rapeseed oil. The beans help in creating a healthy rotation and are grown for premium food export markets. Cover and companion crops are also grown, integrated with cultivation practices to help improve soil quality and keep it in good heart. We use non-inversion cultivation techniques and direct drilling of crops to improve the quality of the soil and reduce costs. This has led to increasing soil organic carbon content and general soil health since 1998. Integrated farming is all about good husbandry – doing the right thing for the right reasons.



Energy saving

We are always looking at ways to reduce our overall energy consumption. Biomass has been used in the past. Both wind turbines and solar panels have been considered, but our site and electricity supply has not allowed us to proceed on such technologies.

Conservation

We are always mindful of the effect of our farming practices on the farm's wildlife. We manage hedges sensitively to provide food and habitat for insects, birds and small mammals. We support environmental initiatives and have over the years, carried out the following as examples: Hedge and tree planting; formation of beetle banks; establishment of wild bird crops; wildflower and nectar areas. We have received advice from the RSPB to help increase numbers of bird species. We have had a number of nesting lapwings on the farm which are particularly rare for this area, erected owl boxes and have even rescued and returned to the wild a Long-eared owl.

Visits

Bottom Farm is our home as well as our business. It is an ideal business to see, from the soil beneath our feet to a finished food product sold in our shops. Integrated Farm Management runs through the whole process, linking production agriculture, environmental biodiversity and food provenance. An ideal visit for students looking for potential careers in food and farming, policy makers, or interest groups. Visits are limited and are arranged through the LEAF office.



About LEAF Demonstration Farms

LEAF Demonstration Farms are commercial farms, which show the beneficial practices of Integrated Farm Management (IFM) to a broad range of audiences, through organised visits. They communicate an understanding of IFM in order to encourage uptake by farmers, support from the industry and political awareness of sustainable food and farming. For more information, visit www.leafuk.org.