

CEO UPDATE



New direction and new opportunities

We are heading towards the end of the first quarter of 2023 and it has been non stop all the way, piecing together some new directions that the Council have agreed we should take. My thanks go to everyone who I have met so far who are helping me with the greater understanding of the sheep industry, the Suffolk Breed and the commercial sheep world where there is a very

compelling argument building that will make the Suffolk the choice of many as we work our way through the next period.

A big part of what is building, is theoretical at this point. Thank you to the members who I have discussed collecting some data about their flocks, helping me build some data behind the theory. I will be making this tool available to download on our website, please use it and share the outcomes with me. You can also point your customers from the commercial world to it and encourage them to use it too, as this will strengthen your case as to why Suffolk sheep deliver an advantage to any commercial enterprise.

I must thank Council too for the support that they have given me over the last three months in finding my feet. It's okay knowing where we are going, so we can create, record, change and adjust to be the best fit for the Society and the membership. The past can't be changed and the intricacies of some of the situations that have been dealt with over the years is where I currently have a gap in my knowledge. That will lessen as we go forward and I will be able to stop pestering the people with that knowledge! That includes the three girls in the office, Anna, Margo and Gill who have helped me massively during the transition, always knowing where some piece of information is to help me out.

Mission Statement

"To breed Suffolk sheep that offer a solution to sheep farmers, processors, wholesalers and retailers to achieve sustainable and profitable outcomes, whatever their business aim."



SHOWS & SALES

Show and sale season is fast approaching and I am looking forward to getting out and about over the summer and meeting and getting to know many more of you. More importantly, giving you the chance to get to know me and share your observations, good or bad, about the Society and our activities.

COMMUNICATION

Listening to our members is one of the key things that can bring us success as a breed and a brand. To that end, I am trying to foster better communications between the levels of management, so that we can hear messages from the grassroots of the Society. In the week following a Council meeting, I host a Zoom call to update Branch Chairs. In turn, they will communicate to Branch Committees, who will take it back to Clubs. As this develops, I hope that it will keep everyone in the loop and to have input as to where we can take the Society.

SKILL SETS

I believe there is a great deal of untapped resource in our wider membership, so I have invited Branches to look within to see if there are any specialist skills that could be brought to the table. Perhaps marketing or social media skills to help make use of the huge and influential digital world. That is just two examples, but if you have a skill set that could add value to the Society please let us know.

SUFFOLK BREED

I firmly believe that the credentials that the Suffolk breed is founded on ticks so many boxes for the consumer that we have to create a brand to help us raise the profile to the commercial industry and the rest of the supply chain right through to the consumer. The information below is taken from the AHDB consumer research and they drive the money that comes into the industry as they pay the most for our product.

88% of consumers claim animal welfare is an important part of food production.
(Source: ICD October 2021)

66% of consumers claim to consider the environmental impact of the food they consume.
(Source: AHDB/YouGov August 2021)

Farmers are the most trusted part of the food supply chain.
(Source: AHDB/Blue Marble August 2021)

15% of consumers claim to be flexitarian meaning they consciously choose to limit their red meat consumption.
(Source: AHDB/Kantar w/e/ 21 February 2021)

72% of consumers claim to try to lead a healthy lifestyle.
(Source: AHDB/Kantar 52 w/e 21st March 2021)

I firmly believe our breed has the environmental and health credentials consumers are looking for, and that gives us an advantage over other sheep breeds. With farmers being the most trusted part of the supply chain, lets utilise that to our advantage, build the credentials that we need to stand behind that Suffolk Brand and shout it from the rooftops! We can then:

USE the trust that the consumer has in farmers and build our credentials around the brand by majoring on the unique selling points that our brand can offer. **BUILD** a series of partners in the brand that can take it forward, retailers, foodservice, processors, and of course farmers. **CREATE** a unique and robust supply chain that gives the opportunity to verify our product and prove beyond doubt that using Suffolk genetics will reduce the carbon footprint of the meat that is going onto the plate.

We have a lot going on and a very exciting time lies ahead that will be gauged by our success in the marketplace behind and beyond the farm gate. I am very proud to be part of this Society that is prepared to set itself aside from the normal and be different in its approach to making the breed even more successful that it already is.

