

Case Study



G J Reynolds Forest Farm, Cranbrook, Kent



KEYPrime
Accounts User

Third generation farmer Lucy Reynolds is a real asset to her father Gordon with a formal qualification in Animal Management from Plumpton College and with her ability to grasp and take forward some of the management workload.

The 235 acre farm is situated on the Weald in Benenden, Kent and therefore plays to its strengths rearing 150 Holstein heifers and an additional 500 acres is rented and used for growing wheat, oats and forage maize as well as grazing. The herd is only at half capacity so heifers are reared and A/d to sexed semen with priority given to replacement and expansion. Grass is grown commercially for the horse hay and haylage market.



Diversification

There is also an established Cat Hotel at Forest Farm, which is run by Lucy and her husband to Feline Advisory Bureau (FAB) standards with accommodation for 40 cats. Small caged pets such as hamsters are welcome to either accompany cats from the same household, or indeed on their own! Lucy comments: "The business is really starting to fly, despite being seasonal; we have more resilience to the ups and downs as we are larger than many of our competitors."

Lucy had no background in accounting so has learned in her words 'on the hoof', her father's bookkeeper had been a Sage user and so she was launched in at the deep end and for a year she continued on the same system. "I found it complex," she says. "Drawing together the different parts of the business was not easy and I was struggling with the cashflows and the budgeting so I asked both our bank manager and CLM, our agricultural advisers, if there was anything more logical and straightforward.

The benefits included:

- Accurate reports on both a cashflow and a profit & loss basis for easier reporting to the bank
- Enterprise analysis to a deeper level e.g. keeping track of farm-bred versus bought in heifers
- Integrated budgets within the software for use in conjunction with Excel
- Refined drilldown management reporting for the Reynolds and their professional advisers

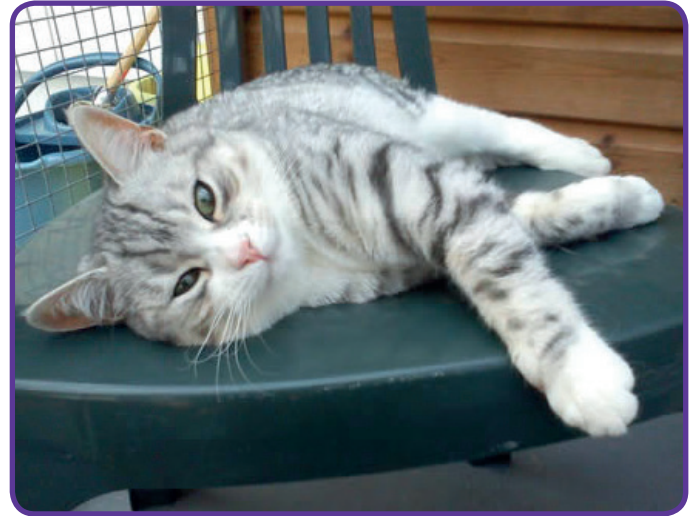


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Funded Training

“CLM had experience of Landmark’s KEYPrime software in the farming sector and so I had a really good demonstration over the web from Nigel Parsons, MD of Landmark. He pointed out that I was eligible for some DEFRA funded training and showed me the benefits of using a program specifically designed for farmers,” Lucy continues.

Following the demonstration and a discussion with Gordon about the benefits the new software could bring them, the decision was taken to go ahead with the new software. Lucy admits to being daunted to start with even though she could see the advantages but some of the data transfer was done on spreadsheet electronically which simplified the operation, and Tracy Vincent, a member of Landmark’s Training and Support team was booked for on-site set up. It was decided that, as a new user, Lucy should backdate her data to her year start in April from the set up in August as an excellent learning routine and to give a full year’s data for comparative purposes.



Training & Support

She explains: “It was essential to get off to a good start and to have immediate answers on the vital issues like VAT and bank reconciliation. I had lots of minor queries and I was re-assured that Tracy would be on the support line if I needed her. It was also a good idea to have a different day with Tracy to get my head around reporting.”

She sums up by saying: I was a new user without accounting experience and I find KEYPrime really user-friendly. It copes with my spasmodic sessions in the office, when I have a big catch up, and we are starting to get a better picture now for our discussions with the bank manager and with Mark Weaver from CLM.”



“A move from Sage has meant that I understand more about our bookkeeping and we have better management information on which to develop the business”