

CO600 Smallholding Poultry Research

Andrews residence transcript

29-09-2018

Present Parties **Stephen Andrews (Landowner and primary client), Sally Andrews (Landowner and business partner of client), Daniel Andrews (Son of Landowner), Joanna Zhang (Interviewer), Damon Sweeney (Interviewer)**

All: [After general introductions and polite exchanges, the poultry related questions begin]

Joanna: Can you please tell us about your routine in the morning?

Steve: The first thing I do is feed the dogs first, but that's not really relevant is it?

All: [Laughing]

Steve: Then I go outside and I feed the goats. It's who cries the loudest really. The goats are just desperate. They bleat a lot in the morning, so I feed those. Then I go and feed the chickens. That's the routine. Soon as the weather gets worse, they'll be horses to do. The horses to muck out and feed. The first thing we'll feed them, and then we have to bring them out and bring them back in the evening. From my point of view, I'm the tractor driver, so I'd have to bring up the hay, bring up the feed, organising all that.

Daniel: If you could automate the chickens it would be one less thing to worry about. In the morning and evening.

Steve: It's one less thing but I still need to feed them, I think automating the feeding would be difficult. Anyway I think it's important you need to interact with them.

Daniel: You need to collect the eggs?

Steve: Not just that, you need to actually spend time and see them. It's part of the farm, Sally wouldn't dream of leaving her horses without checking them once a day - nail might be through their hoof; same with the chickens, could be ill.

Damon: Thank you, can you please tell us a bit more about the chickens?

Steve: Where they're shut up, I let them out. The first thing I do is I go down there, and I feed them, then let them out. So, they're out in their respective runs. But things are going to change soon. It's not going to be a mismatch anymore, it's going to be far more organised.

Sally Andrews enters

Joanna: Tell us about your daily activities on the farm?

Sally: I feed the goats with hard feed, make sure they've got hay and water - check the chickens and do the same. Try to chuck grass and roots to them. I check the horses and do the same again with inclusion of mucking out and riding them.

Damon: What are the munitious tasks?

Sally: The munitious tasks are the feeding of the goats and chickens. If that could be more automated I'd like that. Problems with most farms is rats - you'd have to be careful with the quantity of what you've feeding. You would have to a variable feeding system. I would like something that closes the chickens up at night, I'm not worried about the letting them out but shutting them up ties you to a particular time at night.

Joanna: What are the risks involved in the farm? The chickens?

Sally: Vermin, rats and foxes mostly.

Joanna: Okay, so how do you currently deal with them?

Sally: Shoot them. Shoot rats, shoot foxes and making sure the run is secured and good electric defences. Making sure they're shut up at night as the fox will come along and kill them.

Joanna: And the chickens have to be let out in the morning otherwise they get cranky?

Sally: Yeah, yeah they're quite predictable - they go in according to the darkness and they'll crow when it's light. That's also the same with egg production - the longer the day the more they lay.

Joanna: Do you have access to a laptop or a tablet? Both or none?

Sally: Yes, I have a laptop, a tablet and a PC.

Joanna: Is that the same with Steve?

Steve: Yes, I have a smartphone, laptop.

Daniel: No desktop though, or tablet.

Joanna: Is there internet on the farm? Are we allowed to use the internet? Does it cover the range of the chickens?

Steve: Yes, yes and of course you can use it.

Joanna: Is it WiFi or is it wired in?

Steve: We're hoping for wired but it'll be either as we're working on getting wired over there but currently we have wireless.

Daniel: Both are available, or will be available.

Damon: We'll need to do some internet tests if possible. Do you have cellular range near the chickens? Mobile signal with data.

Steve: I'm not actually sure, I assume so.

Daniel: We do. 4G but very rarely 3G.

Joanna: In regards to the problem you're facing what would we be allowed to modify? For example, can we modify the coop?

Steve & Sally: Yes.

Joanna: What breeds of chicken do you have on the farm?

Sally: We have cream legbars.

Daniel: Croad Langshams.

Sally: Light sussex, lavender blue,

Steve: Speckled Maran I think, it's a chick right now.

Daniel: We've got hybrids as well, hens and cockerels. Mixed breeds, whatever you wish to call them.

Cream Legbar, Croad Langsham, Lavender bantams, Silkie bantams, bluebell and warrens.

Damon: One last question - why are you into keeping chickens?

Steve: As a hobby and an interest. We like fresh eggs - we like to know where they've come from. There are some financial

interest - we're hoping it might generate further revenue with breeding.

Joanna: So you don't eat them?

Steve: No, there not the sort of chickens that you eat. They're layers - the chickens you get in the supermarket are not the same as the ones we have.

Damon: What is the current concerns with the your routine, why do you want an 'automated solution'?

Steve: The thing it's very easy to forget, you can't go on holiday - it's very restricting we have to be here 24/7 and we're very vulnerable because of it.

Joanna: Okay, we should be done now then. Can we go look at your chickens?

Daniel: Yeah that's no problem, let' go.