

# Pendower Farm



The new equipment packed on the trailer

## Background

Sheep grazing in green fields with lambs gambolling around is a quintessential sight in the British countryside.

Unlike cattle, which are generally kept closer to the farm due to TB regulations and brought inside in the winter, sheep are highly mobile and can provide a beneficial service to other farmers by keeping their fields maintained while improving soil structure and fertility.

In relation to cattle, sheep have relatively low capital requirements with little or no building and machinery needs. Sheep can benefit from modern, efficient temporary fencing and watering options, so are relatively mobile and can be moved around easily.

Will Taffinder is a second-generation farmer and lives at Pendower Farm on the picturesque Roseland peninsula near Truro in Cornwall with his wife Robyn. Like many farmers he has many strings to his bow and is also a fisherman during the summer months, selling his catch in Curgurrell Farm Shop run by his parents.

## Economy and Sustainability

Will and Robyn have more than 500 ewes grazing on fields all over the Roseland peninsula in Cornwall. They have been increasing their flock with the help from new equipment recently bought and part-funded by a grant from the LEADER programme through the Coast to Coast Local Action Group.

The new equipment allows them to transport a mobile sheep yard on a trailer, so they can travel to the sheep, quickly set up a yard using new lightweight hurdles, scan and weigh the sheep and carry out all the tasks necessary to keep the sheep healthy such as vaccinating, shearing etc., all in the field where the sheep are grazing. They then pack up and carry on to the next site.

Before they got the grant, it took 2 people to lug heavy hurdles that were prone to fall over, and the weighing scales were not accurate as they fluctuated wildly. The new equipment includes digital scales which take an average reading and a scanner, so the tag on each ewe or lamb can be scanned and the digital weight recorded all at the touch of a button.

# Mobile sheep handling equipment



The lightweight mobile yard in use



Now Will is able to expand his flock as he can get around different groups much more efficiently and does not need any facilities on the site where the sheep are grazing, as all the equipment he needs is neatly packed onto his trailer and taken with him. This has made it easier to take on more land and expand the business.

Will said: "Having the equipment means we are more appealing to other farmers. We have just taken on an agreement with a large arable farmer to graze our sheep on his land between crops and we couldn't have done that without the new kit."

Local farmers are benefiting from his expanding business as they derive income from allowing the sheep to graze on their fields between crops and during the winter when their cattle are housed. The grazing sheep are also very beneficial to the grass and soil.

Lambing season is twice a year for Will and Robyn with one group of ewes lambing in the autumn and another in the spring.

The lamb is sold locally in the farm shop and marketed through Truro livestock market, run by auctioneers Lodge and Thomas, and Cornwall Quality Livestock Producers (CQLP) which is an independent livestock marketing co-operative based in the South West.

"We are keeping more sheep, so we are benefiting local markets and agricultural shops and as we grow our business local farmers also benefit," Will says.

Thanks to the LEADER funding, the new equipment has enabled Pendower Farm to expand by providing an efficient, low-stress solution for managing the sheep, both for the sheep and for Will, who is now able to go out and manage the sheep single-handed and finish his work in a much shorter time, allowing him and Robyn to focus on all the other areas of the business. A win-win for all concerned.

**Local Action Group Funding: £3,896**

If you are interested in applying for LEADER funding visit [www.localactioncornwall.co.uk](http://www.localactioncornwall.co.uk)