

Investing in Rural Diversification

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Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF), Rural Business Grant

Diversification of commercial activity on a farm estate by creating a farm shop to champion local produce and diversify the estate's offer



Lodge Farm North Norfolk, part of the Gurney Farm Estate, is based at Northrepps. There are a number of challenges facing rural farms and agriculture businesses, and diversification has become essential for many estates in order to create new income streams. These new ventures can often complement the more traditional farm operation and breathe new life into redundant agricultural buildings or under-utilised spaces.

Located within the estate's burgeoning North Norfolk Business Centre, a Rural Business Grant from North Norfolk District Council has supported the development of a new farm shop through repurposing and upcycling a former shipping container. The shop will sell local produce, grown and produced nearby, and will support and champion local produce. North Norfolk is renowned for its rich tapestry of local food producers, offering a diverse range of fresh, seasonal and artisanal products, and the business plans to become a destination to showcase the amazing local offer. This attunes with the business's plan to be as sustainable as possible through seeking to achieve minimal food miles and having a quality range of products that meets the needs and budgets of both local customers and visitors to the area.

The Estate has seen a number of phased developments over the years, and it continues to explore new ways to support and foster local enterprises. The Estate's ethos is very much focused on creating a mutually sustainable community of businesses supporting each other and working collaboratively.

“Diversification is very important. I think it's very tough for smaller scale farmers. I'm really keen on being able to sell delicious, nutrient dense food to people at a fair price. The idea came partly from a meeting I had with the local council and partly from something we wanted to do for a while. We talked to the council, they said they had some funding available and we jumped at the opportunity. We wanted to do this anyway but it would have taken us longer to save up. This has given us the kick to get on with it now!”

Tom Gurney,
Gurney Farm Partnership

Lodge Farm, Crossdale Street,
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