



Colin Langridge
Rushfields Plant Centre
Poynings



RUSHFIELDS
Farm Shop

The
beginning



Rushfields today

RUSHFIELDS
Farm Shop



South Downs National Park
Great opportunities with extra visitors
Bring them on!



Rushfields Plant Centre

- Produces and retails garden plants and associated products on 2 sites
- Employs 44 people
- Sales of £1.3m including catering
- Has over 50,000 customer visits per year



Why has Rushfields made the quarter century?

- Strong family partnership
- Location
- Staff development & retention - IIP
- Always looking for the next opportunity
- Bloody hard graft!!!



Food retailing at Rushfields

- 1000 sq ft retail space
- Part funded from RDPE
- £150k total investment
- Already have over 50 suppliers the majority from Sussex
- 40% of sales from fresh meat

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Farm
Shop

Rushfields Farm Shop





Issues on setting up the Farm Shop

- Lack of support from local authorities
- 3 planning applications and an appeal
- Endless “Red tape” from every authority possible!
- Hard work raising finance even after 20 years with the bank



Day to day issues with the Farm Shop

- Supply problems - attitudes of producers vary enormously
- Limited wholesale distribution of local products
- Fresh produce very difficult



How could we all do better?

- Focus on the customer first, rather than production
- Don't make it difficult for us to buy your product
- Are Co-Ops the way forward for fresh produce?



What's the future for Rushfields?

- Growing the food offer maybe even to equal the Garden Centre - selling £1m of Sussex produce
- Increasing rural jobs
- Providing a future for the next generation even on 6 acres



What's the future for Sussex producers with Rushfields?

- Small producers can grow with us
- Within 5 years we hope to be buying over £1/2m of local produce, creating a stronger local economy
- There is a place for rural retailers, lets have a bit of support

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The futures great for Sussex
produce, if we all work together!