FARMER IN TRAINING

Our Dairy journey

BACKGROUND

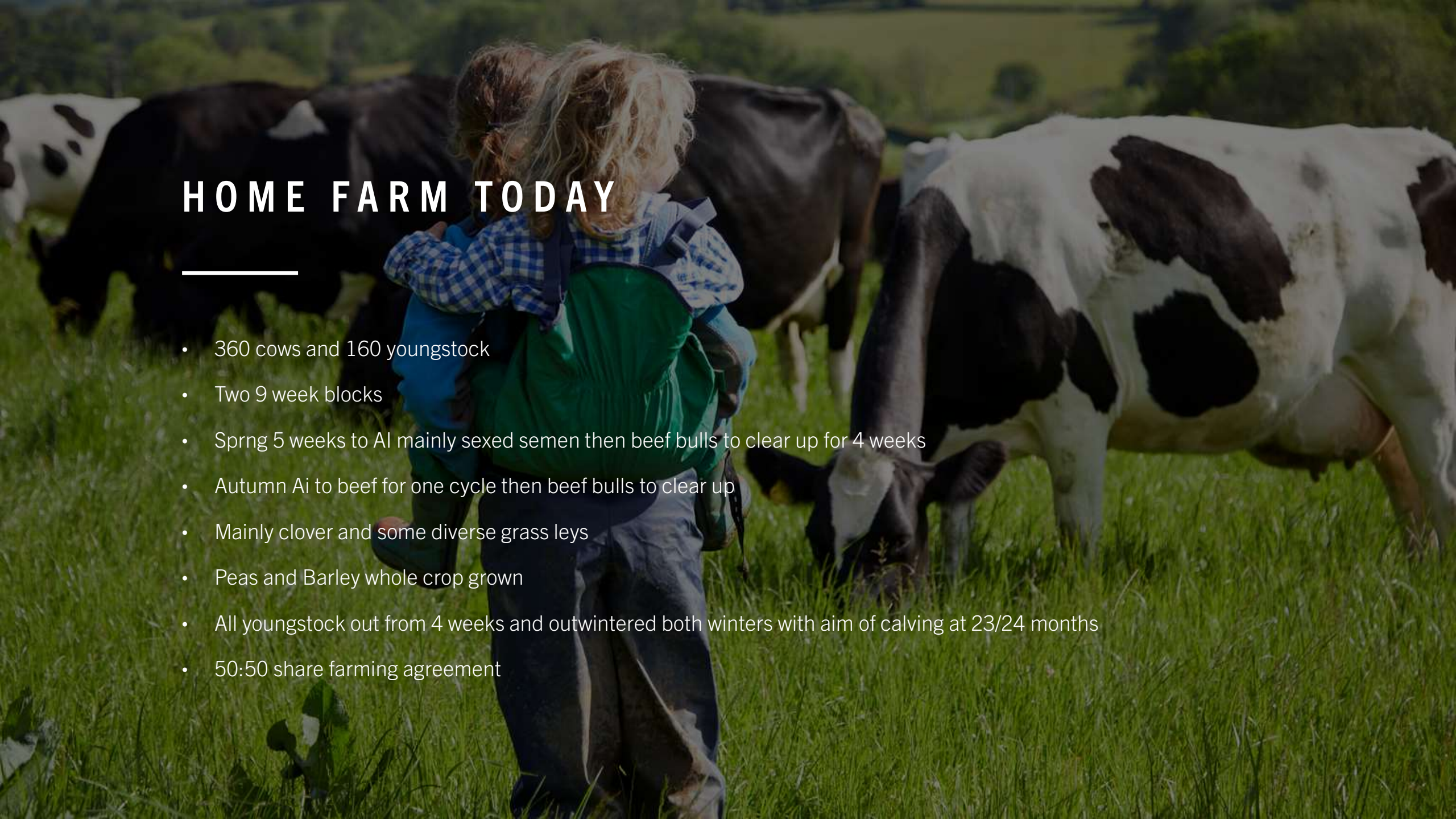
*TOM AND SOPHIE GREGORY
*SHARE FARMING 360
ORGANIC COWS
*TWO 9 WEEK CALVING 2/3
SPRING 1/3 AUTUMN
* LOW INPUT LOW OUTPUT
SYSTEM YIELDING AVERAGE
5,500 LTS
* FOCUS ON GRASS TO MILK

THE JOURNEY

- Met at Glastonbury Festival 2007 at 17 and 18.
- Tom's dad was a dairy farmer but had sold the cows when Tom was 10
- I'm not from an agricultural background and was studying to become an accountant
- Had first child at 18
- Tom was footriming and rearing calves for veal on a high welfare contract in partnership with our now business partner.
- The dream was always to go back into diary much to my confusion
- After a couple of missed opportunities in 2014 we went into partnership with a local organic diary farmer to take on 575 acres (232 ha) Home Farm on the Sadborow Estate

JOURNEY CONTIUNED....

- The original plan was to milk 280 spring calving cows and convert to organic as quickly as we could. All youngstock and forage would be done in house
- The partnership was set up with Tom and I putting in 20% of the start up costs and our business partner putting in the other 80% with the idea of us buying the remaining shares to 50:50 through our profit share
- Fertility in the first year wasn't great with cows being bought from 50 different farms as milk price was strong. We ended up keeping the empty cows and getting them in calf for autumn
- In 2017 312 acres (126 ha) came up locally which gave the perfect opportunity to move youngstock off the platform and take control of silage being made



HOME FARM TODAY

- 360 cows and 160 youngstock
- Two 9 week blocks
- Sprng 5 weeks to AI mainly sexed semen then beef bulls to clear up for 4 weeks
- Autumn Ai to beef for one cycle then beef bulls to clear up
- Mainly clover and some diverse grass leys
- Peas and Barley whole crop grown
- All youngstock out from 4 weeks and outwintered both winters with aim of calving at 23/24 months
- 50:50 share farming agreement

LOOKING AT DAIRYING DIFFERENTLY

- After 5 years being organic and soil indices not improving, we started to look for different answers.
- Soil for Tom being the biggest focus to feed the cow from the ground up
- For me the social impact of the farm is really important.
- With the subsidies going maintaining profitability without key

• SOIL:
REALLY DOES HAVE THE ANSWERS

* REDUCING TILLAGE BY NOT PLOUGHING
* FRESHENING TIRED LEYS THROUGH DIRECT DRILLING
* MOB GRAZING YOUNGSTOCK TO BUILD SOIL
* PLANT DIVERSITY VIA ADDING SPECIES
* BETTER USE OF NUTRIENTS – COMPOSTING AND SLURRY APPLICATION RATES

REGEN AGRICULTURE THE BUZZ WORD?!

- For us it's a way of looking at the business as a whole and making sure that we are having a positive benefit on the people working here the community the soil nature the herd.
- Think its so farm specific not a set of standards more principles with that you work out what works for the farm and your business
- Taking it a step further than sustainable
- Leads us on to the arla regen pilot

Regenerative farming pilot farmnetwork

Taking a leading role in developing and scaling regenerative dairy farming

BACKGROUND

Farmers and the food sector are under pressure to respond to the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss. Amid the challenges, regenerative agriculture offers the dairy sector a chance to embrace new practices and narratives, away from reducing harm, towards actively doing good.

By working with nature, they help to enrich soils, increase biodiversity, improve water quality, and enhance ecosystem services. These ecosystems services include things such as carbon sequestration, nutrient cycling, food productivity, and climate resilience.

Despite the growing momentum around regenerative agriculture, there is currently no regulatory or legal definition of what regenerative agriculture is. Furthermore, there are limited scientific examples of regenerative farming within the context of grass based dairy farming systems in Europe. As a European dairy co-operative, owned by over 9000 farmers across 7 countries, it is critical for Arla to gain a better understanding of how regenerative practices could be applied in dairy farming, and better understand how this approach could be adopted at scale across both organic and conventional dairy farming systems.

ARLA'S REGENERATIVE FARMING PILOT NETWORK

From September 2021, Arla will establish a network of pilot farms to provide insights and learnings about how to support Arla's farmer owners in adopting more regenerative practices.

By collaborating closely with farmer owners, Arla wants farmers to drive the evolution and implementation of what it means to farm regeneratively in the context of dairy systems and make them an integral part of agreeing relevant principles and practices for success at scale. These pilots will also create an opportunity for members to meet on farms and gain inspiration, share experiences and learn from each other.

WHAT IS REGENERATIVE FARMING?

There is no singular, approved definition of regenerative farming. Schreefel et al (2020) highlighted the lack of a clear definition when reviewing 28 different studies on regener farming. The variation in definitions reflects the nature of the evolving ecosystem that t regenerative farming movement represents.

In the absence of a legal or regulatory definition, it is important for Arla to define what we understand regenerative farming to be and how we can start to develop and scale across Arla farmers.

Arla's approach to Regenerative Farming:

- A farm management approach rooted in **principles** which benefit ecosystem processe (e.g. water cycles, mineral cycles, energy cycles, community dynamics) to deliver improvements in ecological, economic and social measures
- The focus is on implementing **practices** that mimic ecosystem complexity and functioning (e.g. adaptive multi-paddock grazing)
- The practices implemented on each farm must be appropriate for its' **unique context**. Therefore, regenerative farming is not prescriptive and can be applied to any system (conventional and organic). However, a regenerative system is one that is truly "regenerating"
- A key enabler to adopting a regenerative farming approach is a **mindset shift** in how farmers understand and interact with nature in a way that embraces the complexity of ecosystems and the needs of people living and working within them.
- Regenerative farming demonstrates how farmers, and their cows can be a **force for go** to deliver a positive impact on the planet, animals and people.

SO THAT’S OUR STORY. WHATS NEXT? IM NOT SURE BUT I GO TO BED EXCITED TO GET UP AND FARM THE NEXT DAY

KEEP PUNCHING THOSE CEILINGS

TRULY GRATEFUL FOR ALL THE SUPPORT WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN FROM LANDLORDS TO BUSINESS PARTNERS TO CONSULTANTS TO OUR FAB TEAM HERE FRIENDS AND FAMILY YOU MADE THE DREAM A RELAITY THANK YOU