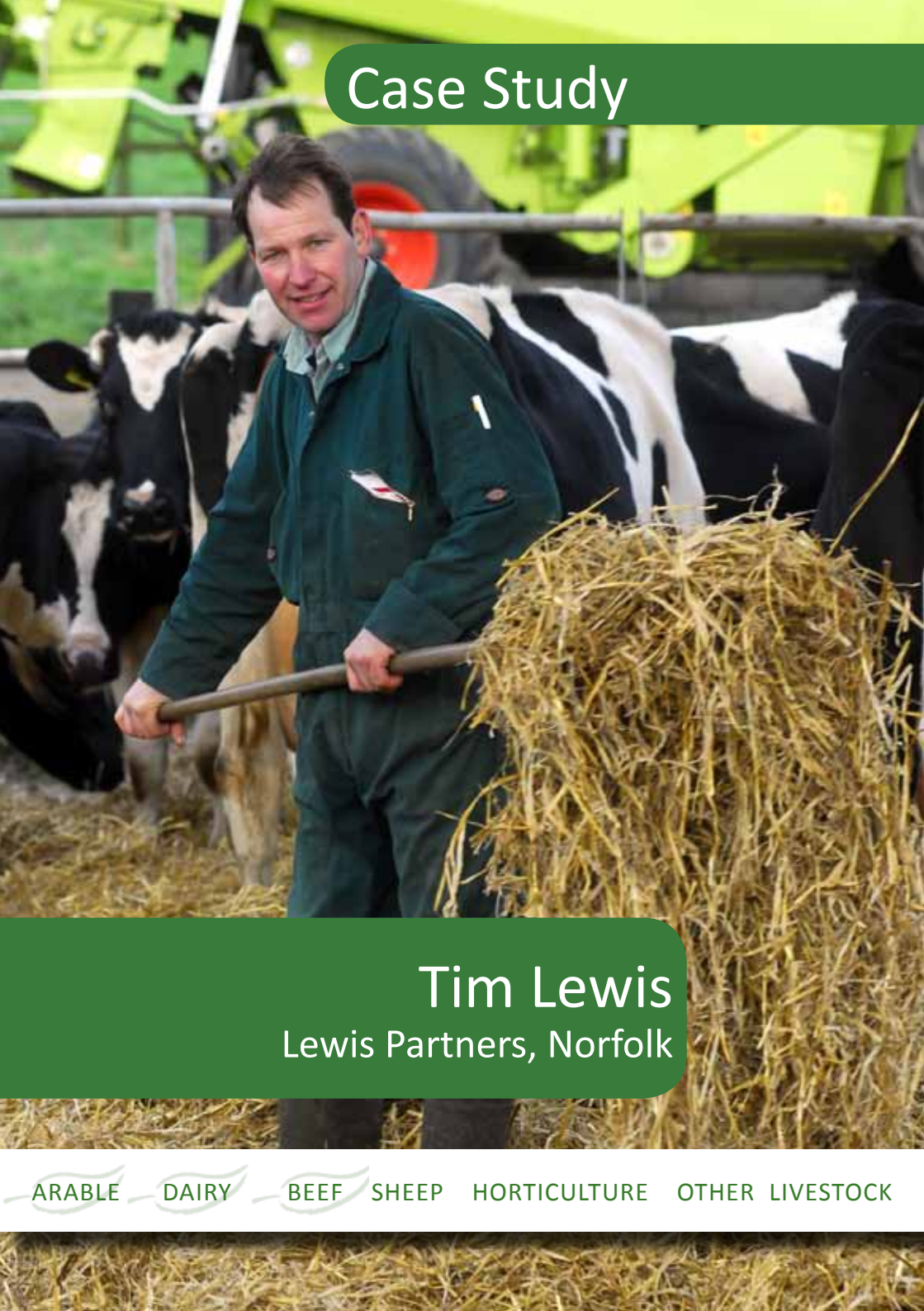


Case Study



Tim Lewis

Lewis Partners, Norfolk

ARABLE

DAIRY

BEEF

SHEEP

HORTICULTURE

OTHER LIVESTOCK

Tim Lewis

Dairy, beef and arable farmer



Size
600 ha



Staff
2 full time



Rainfall
620 mm



Soil type
Beccles clay



Tim and his father took over the tenancy of Shotford Hall Farm in 2000. They run a 147 cow dairy herd. Some are bred with Holsteins to give replacement heifers and bulls to finish on barley. Others are bred

- Wheat
- Barley
- Sugar beet
- Vining peas
- Oil seed rape
- Grass leys
- Maize

with Limousins and Belgian Blues to supply a local suckler herd with replacement heifers and steers for finishing.

Time is divided between the farm, contract farming, partner cultivating and lifting sugar beet. We are assisted by a full time arable operator and a full time herdsman who manages the dairy unit.

“ The principles of Integrated Farm Management resonate through our whole farming approach allowing us to farm commercially, whilst also benefiting the environment. ”

Why LEAF?

I love farming. It's a fantastic way of life and I feel hugely privileged to do what I do. I want my children to have a future in farming and to pass on a profitable business, working hand in hand with nature. Being a member of LEAF gives me the support I need to achieve this.

www.leafuk.org

Financial

I first came into contact with LEAF through our contract with Birds Eye and then joined in my own right in 2002, soon after I took over the farm tenancy. One of the biggest benefits of LEAF membership is the LEAF Audit. As well as giving you a head start with new environmental regulations, it also helps you think objectively about your whole business and consider where you can make improvements.

Some of the changes we've made as a result of doing the LEAF Audit include:

- Moving from a wholly plough based system to using non-inversion tillage, cultivating only the top 9 to 10 inches, this has really improved our soil structure.
- Rethinking our nutrient use. The LEAF Audit encouraged us to view manure as a valuable nutrient bank, instead of a waste product. We now target our applications to where they are needed most which has reduced our fertiliser costs considerably.
- Targeting our agrochemicals much more accurately. We now think more about pest threshold levels and only spray if we really have to. The environment benefits as well as our bottom line.



The LEAF Audit

Only available to LEAF members and included in your membership fee, the LEAF Audit provides a comprehensive health check of the farm and gives benchmarks and action plans to focus the business for the year ahead. Saving you time and money.

Environmental

Farming with environmental care, whilst ensuring a profitable farming business is what LEAF and its IFM principles are all about. As a farmer, I need practical management tools to help me to do this, that don't cost a fortune, aren't going to take up all my time, are easy to use and work!

LEAF membership has definitely made me more aware of the environmental impact of our farming practices. For example, because we farm along the Waveney Valley, soil erosion is a particular issue for us. Prompted by questions in the LEAF Audit, we have put tramlines across the field and leave some areas fully cropped to prevent gulleys forming.



We were also one of the earliest entrants into ELS and focused on targeting ELS options, such as wildflower areas and field corners, to the least productive areas of the farm. I really think being a member of LEAF and doing the Audit gives us a head start on new environmental regulations. It makes you question everything and has developed my whole attitude to the environment.

“I don't always have time to pick up on the latest innovations or the wider issues facing the industry. The LEAF Audit really helps keep me up to date.”

Social



I want to do everything I can to help people - be they supermarket buyers or the general public - make the vital link between the food they buy, how it is produced and how much they pay for it. The support I receive from LEAF to help me host great farm visits and increase my confidence has been invaluable.

Getting involved in Open Farm Sunday has been particularly rewarding. The resources and training LEAF offers its host farmers is fantastic. I've opened up four times now and it's a great way to improve the general public's perception of farming. It has also increased the local communities understanding of what we do and made us more approachable. People will often stop me now for a chat and look at the cows over the hedge!

“ Welcoming people onto the farm, through events like Open Farm Sunday and showing them what I do and why, will help contribute to a more secure future in farming for my children. ”

One of the spin offs to opening up for Open Farm Sunday has been local primary schools inviting me to give talks and host visits. Seeing a group of inner city children get so much enjoyment from being out in an open field was very special.



Open Farm Sunday is the farming industry's annual open day that gives everyone the chance to meet the farmers who grow their food and care for the countryside. Open Farm Sunday is organised by LEAF.

LEAF's IFM



LEAF's Integrated Farm Management (IFM) approach combines the best of traditional farming methods with modern technology, allowing farmers to manage their farms in an informed, professional and caring way. IFM encourages farmers to maintain the highest standards of food production with the minimum environmental impact.

Join LEAF today

TECHNICAL EVENTS • DEMONSTRATION FARMS • SPEAK OUT • LEAF MARQUE • LEAF AUDIT • GREEN BOX

Go to www.leafuk.org and join online!

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