

Standing out from the crowd

Arriving at Redhill Farm is in itself a joy. In a lush green corner of Gainsborough, the farm is not only picture perfect but the welcome party is second to none.

Minutes down the track and you're greeted by a drove of perky snouts and inquisitive eyes, all grunting in chorus to a tune ringing with curiosity.

Even after this briefest brush with Redhill Farm's prized residents it's clear to see that their happiness and welfare is the top priority for Jane and Terry.

Indeed, on chatting with the

pioneering couple, it is easy to understand just how Redhill Farm as a business has come so far. Quite simply by Jane and Terry doing very little to something they are very good at producing.

That's not to say that the journey hasn't been hard work, or that the couple's future plans to

expand the farm shop and add to their product list will be a walk in the park, but the essence of what makes the produce coming out of Redhill Farm so special can be found in the approach Jane and Terry have taken.

By keeping the principles behind their business and the produce simple, Jane and Terry have been able to grow and raise both on their own terms.

"It's been a long process, we've been farming here for 22 years, but we always just wanted to do things simply," said Jane.

Scrupulously selective about who they supply to and selling only at local farmers' markets and their farm shop, Jane and Terry have a genuine commitment to quality and consistency, and an integrity that is more than mildly refreshing in today's climate.

At every stage, from naturally rearing the free range Duroc cross Landrace pigs and farming the land, to the production and sale of all of Redhill Farm's produce, Jane, Terry and their carefully selected team are hands on, doing it all. So it's no wonder that Redhill Farm is Freedom Farm accredited.

"We never sell our product to anybody, all we want to do is make sure that for those that choose to buy from us, they're getting the very best quality," explained Jane.

"All we've done is inform people, we've never advertised, it's all word of mouth. Originally I just did a leaflet, that we posted around the local villages letting people know what we do. By the time we got home from posting the leaflets the phone was ringing and it didn't stop for three months, it just snowballed."

"We only wanted to sell locally that's why we started the farmers markets in the first place," she continues. "If you go back 12 years there were no farmers' markets, and the only way for people to buy British was to flock to the supermarkets in the presumption it would be British." When the company was

created back in 1998, it was the result of Jane's building frustration that cheap, low grade pork was being imported into the UK and being sold as British to unsuspecting consumers. "It shouldn't be the responsibility of the consumer to have to keep checking all the labels. Every single retailer has been caught out with these food scares, selling things as British that weren't," said Jane.

"Their customers should have that same peace of mind that our customers have, they shouldn't have to take for granted that the shop they've been loyal to has made the right decisions for them.

"I realised that that was our unique selling point early on. Selling to the local public from a small farmers' market, giving people that consistent quality.

"Eighty per cent of what we sell is at farmers' markets. It's a simple

way for people to know exactly what they are buying and where it has come from, because we, the producers, are there selling it; they're genuinely getting what they think they're getting and that's very rare these days."

With an unwavering level of high standards and attention to detail going into everything that Jane and Terry do, it's no wonder that suppliers are carefully vetted.

"We're selective about who we supply, that's why we go to the trouble of selling it in person so we know when people eat or taste our product, it's in the best possible condition. Supplying restaurants, however, is still very much along the lines of if it fits in with what we do at the farm. Once you fit together well, if they're genuine and consistent, we're happy for them to put our name on the menu," commented Jane.

Affectionately known as 'the stall with the queue' at farmers' markets, there is no doubt about Jane and Terry's continued dedication to the values which formed the foundation of their business; simplicity, provenance and quality. Anyone that has ever tasted one of their perfectly Lincolnshire sausages, cooked a joint of their pork for the family on Sunday or wolfed down a wedge of their pork pie can testify to that.

"What you find with anything, any product is that people are constantly trying to cut down, from the time it takes to produce to the cost of the ingredients to make as much money as possible, so if you're a type of business that does the opposite you're going to stand out. It's about making better choices, in everything you buy."

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Meet the team: Redhill Farm's Jane and Terry Tomlinson with their farm team

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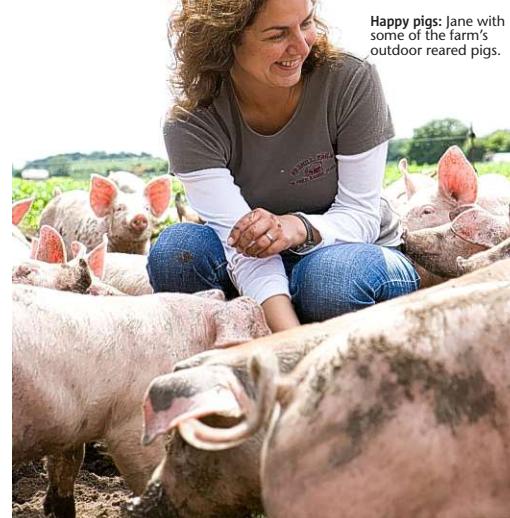
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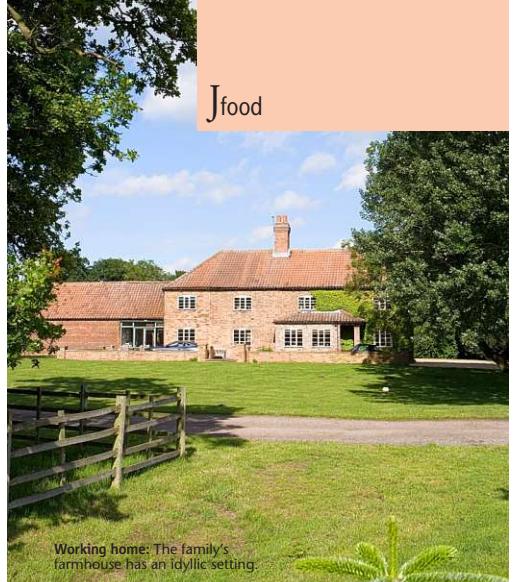
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Happy pigs: Jane with some of the farm's outdoor reared pigs.



Working home: The family's farmhouse has an idyllic setting.

Achievements and accolades

Renowned as the Fine Food Oscars, the awards' three star system is the equivalent of Michelin Stars for food producers. With 20 judges all needing to decide a product unanimously 'perfect', competition at the Great Taste Awards' is undeniably tough. Redhill Farm has won a Great Taste Award for every single product it produces.

Outside of the Great Taste Awards, Redhill Farm has also taken home a huge array of awards and accreditations recognising its commitment to quality, and honest produce including...

- ▶ Winner Lincolnshire People's Choice Award 2013
- ▶ Winner Best In Britain Countryside/Farm Business – Greats of Great Britain Awards 2012
- ▶ Select Lincolnshire Producer of the Year 2012
- ▶ BBC Good Food magazine – Top 3 Artisan Sausage Producers 2011
- ▶ Winner Countryside Alliance Local Food Award 2011 – East England Region
- ▶ Lincoln Sausage Festival 2010 – Lincolnshire's Favourite Sausage
- ▶ The Oscar Brown Perpetual Challenge Cup 2010 Lincolnshire Agricultural Society
- ▶ Tastes Of Lincolnshire Grower of the Year 2010
- ▶ British Pie Awards – Reserve Champion 2009

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