

The Lakes Free Range Egg Company



The Lakes Free Range Egg Company is a family owned business producing and packing free range and organic free range eggs. Based in the heart of Cumbria, 'The Lakes' is industry leading in its approach to animal welfare and environmental provenance.

We talked to David Brass who runs this successful business alongside his wife Helen about the importance of good online connectivity in supporting what they do.

David told us, "we are constantly looking for ways to reduce energy consumption and have designed and built a state of the art egg packing facility with a very low carbon footprint."

"This facility is leading edge in terms of the technology used. Our online connection supports the utilisation of car robots to pack eggs and lasering technology to avoid the need for labels."

"In addition we have also developed a new state of the art rearing facility with the aim of producing more active pullets that are less likely to feather peck, are better feathered, with improved bone strength and more mobility. This facility relies on an online connection to support for example the bespoke monitoring equipment that enables refined measurement of data including temperature, ammonia and CO2 levels. The facility operates a continuous and consistent weighing of birds with 'hop on' plates weighing around 1000 birds each day, without the stress of extra handling. This constant daily data is used to analyse performance and highlight any anomalies in such".

David told us "we were the first in the country to guarantee farm of origin for all our eggs. We are proud of our products and all our farmer suppliers, so if your egg comes from us, you can type in the egg code and "Trace your Egg" to the farm of origin. This online function is a great asset, I think many consumers now want to know where their products come from and this enables them to find out via a link on our website. It is simple, but really effective in terms of enabling consumer knowledge of the products they are serving up in their homes".

David went on "we supply some of the most demanding retail and food service customers in the country and work closely with them to ensure we continue to push for the best we can in our field of work. In terms of communication with retail and food service customers, much of this is carried out online whether that be via an online meeting, an email, a phone call or an exchange of messages. All of our orders, delivery acknowledgements, invoicing and payments are through EDI (electronic data interchange) our business ceases to function without a good internet connection. We need to be accessible to our customers and having an online capability means we can be this".

David went on, in addition to the contact we have with our customers, I am also a member of the Laying Hen Welfare Forum who are continuously looking at ways to improve animal

welfare. As part of this work, we have been working on developing protocols and advising ministers and DEFRA with much of the behind the scenes work carried out online”.

David said, “innovation drives The Lakes Free Range Egg Company, be that developing new packing facilities, supporting animal welfare research, implementing new energy initiatives, creating training plans for producers or, most recently, developing and building a pioneering new chick rearing facility. Having an online connection is key to all of these workpieces; it is so important that businesses across our county have access to ‘good connectivity’ so we can keep progressing and moving forward”.

Behind the scenes, the need for good connectivity is paramount to the ability to carry out back office functions such as email management, social media management, online banking, HR functions, recruitment, sales and invoicing and website management to name a few”.

“Our website is a place where we showcase all that we are about covering what we do, our values, information on our brands and even egg facts and recipes. Our website works hand in hand with our social media page to make us ‘available’ to customers at any time. We keep both our website and social media platforms up to date and current with all the latest information on what we are doing”.



David knows only too well of the implications of having minimal online connectivity. He said “our Great Salkeld facility boasts a gigabit speed broadband connection thanks to the successful delivery of a community scheme in our area by B4RN. This successful community scheme has been a great asset to the village and all who reside here whether that be for home or business use. It has really propelled us in terms of what we are able to do from a business perspective. Our site at Stainton however has not as yet received any upgrade to its existing online connectivity. I have to say this really holds us back in terms of what we are able to do from the site. I am really supportive of the work carried out by Connecting Cumbria in their ambition that ‘no one and no place is left behind’ in terms of good online connectivity. Unfortunately for our site at Stainton, there is still a waiting game to play but we do hope for improvements as part of commercial works in the area. We are currently looking at alternative options to fill the gap until this comes to fruition”.

David would urge other businesses and residents to check the connectivity options in their area “Cumbria has so much to offer, we need to be forward thinking and pushing ourselves out there to achieve to our best, having a strong online connection is key to this”.

To find out more about this Cumbria-based business, visit their website [The Lakes Free Range Egg Company Home - The Lakes Free Range Egg Company](#), Facebook page [Facebook](#), X (formerly Twitter) page [x.com/lakesfreerange](#)