

When the time came for investment in a new store at Lynn South Farm, Newport, Shropshire, the decision was made to construct an innovative dual-purpose building to meet the needs of two very different farm enterprises. Georgina Haigh went along to find out more.

Dual-purpose store for potatoes and petals

Lynn South is a farm with a colourful diversification enterprise. Alongside the potatoes, wheat and oilseed rape grown on the 607-hectare farm in Shropshire, mixed colour delphiniums and other flowers are grown, dried and stored on-farm as part of a novel business supplying natural petal confetti.

The total farmed area is a mix of rented and owned land and is managed by a family partnership, with Michael Bubb and his two sons John and Jim running the farm.

John takes responsibility for the administration, agronomy and arable cropping, while Jim, an ex-Harper Adams engineer, manages the machinery on-farm and the internet-based confetti business Shropshire Petals.

The brothers' grandmother was the inspiration behind Shropshire Petals. Originally starting with flowers grown in her own garden and dried over the Aga, Michael and his wife



The new 2,600-tonne store is capable of working at high temperature and low humidity or vice-versa.

Rosemary realised the business potential and put down 0.4ha of flowers, and from there the business has quite literally blossomed.

Innovation

Once completely dried, petals will keep for up to 18 months, do not need re-drying and are sold all year round. Innovative thinking by the family has resulted in the farm being able to build two purpose-built stores, including most recently a dual-purpose building, which from July to September will be used to dry and store flowers. But from September through to May both stores will be used to refrigerate up to 2,600 tonnes of potatoes.

Both crops need carefully controlled ventilation for

storage and drying and this was the starting point for the new build.

The first of the two stores, a new potato store, was completed in 2011 and work on the second, designed from the onset as a dual-purpose building, got underway in

March 2014. The building has recently been completed and the new store is in use for its first harvest.

The Bubbbs were able to secure a 40% Rural

New store

- ▶▶ Can store up to 2,600 tonnes of potatoes
- ▶▶ Designed to store potatoes in bulk and petals which are boxed
- ▶▶ Interior access system
- ▶▶ Can work at high temperature and low humidity or opposite
- ▶▶ Fitted wet pad humidity system
- ▶▶ Refrigeration and reverse heating system
- ▶▶ Insulated louvres

“ Fully insulated louvres help maintain the climate within the store and give more control
Richard Cook

Lynn South Farm

- ▶▶ 607 hectares
- ▶▶ 162ha of potatoes planted in 2014, 70% of which are sold on contract
- ▶▶ Cropping includes feed wheat and oilseed rape
- ▶▶ Farm is entered in Entry Level Stewardship