



100 batch award



Peter Bowen, commonly and affectionately known as Freddie, has been at Shaws Farm for over 40 years.

This year Fred has achieved his 100th batch of pigs with BQP. Mr Howard Revell, BQP's pig production director and Fred's first fields person presented Fred with his award.

40 years ago Fred purchased Shaws Farm, his father believing him to be a little foolish in the purchase of the farm, being only 6 acres of land and some old livestock buildings.

Fred started work on his farm immediately housing pigs in the buildings to finish, whilst living in a caravan on site.

In 1984 Fred started to keep finishing pigs for BQP in the original buildings, 2 years later he received permission to build a new finishing house whilst also getting permission to be allowed to convert a small part of the barn into a dwelling.

The new 40' x 120' shed went up and was split into 4 yards for a retailer's contract of "Green pigs." This is not the term Green as we know it today, but a nod to the belief that yarded pigs are of a higher welfare. The contract lasted for two years. Fashions change, and now the emphasis went on to performance predominantly Food Conversion.

So again, Fred had to change his shed, as was the style of the day a "Suffolk style" building was built. With 8ft dunging passages running along each outer wall. The pens for the pigs in the centre of the building with 6ft kennels over the top.





Whilst all this was happening Fred was supplementing his income by working on a neighbouring farm working with cattle and doing tractor work.

Also at this time, Fred purchased a large pressure washer and help BQP when farms needed to be washed to improve farm health. It's strange to think that in the early 1990's farms were not regularly washed out as they are today!

Fred was one of the first to become a professional washer within the industry, specialising in washing down piggeries and all that went with it, often getting involved in "on farm advice" to BQP farmers on how to improve the performance of the farm with his vast array of practical knowledge.

In 1997 Fred went to build his second shed, this was 50ft x 120ft, similar floor plan with a corridor running



through the centre of the building giving excellent viewing access of the pigs. Again, on the back of these plans he received full planning for the rest of the barn, allowing Fred to expand his property from a one up one down, to a three-bed converted barn with all the amenities of the day. The barn was finally converted in 2010 the year of his marriage to Heather.

Fred being Fred, the building was put up by himself and his friends with all the pigs coming into building one, half way through the build. Four weeks later after the help of a BQP fields person putting up the Yorkshire boarding on the building, the pigs were split across the farm into the new building.

In 1999 the pig sector got hit by PMWS and PDNS now known as Circovirus. As a result, to try and combat the disease BQP made the decision to go to wean to finish batches on as many farms as possible. This meant the work Fred and his pressure washer did became a full-time job alongside with some digger work he did with his trusty JCB.

Fred also at this time converted his buildings to take in piglets, he was one of the early farms to do so within our system so this allowed him to offer excellent practical advice to others on how to set up for the arrival of the piglet.

Fred stopped his digger work some years ago due to the layers of regulations needed to work for others, he continued full time pressure washing until a couple of years ago but sadly had to call it a day due to ill health.



This batch is Fred's 101st Batch, he received an award for achieving the 100th batch and photos of the award were posted on social media, just one of the comments from a vet who had worked with Fred was posted.

“One of the best stockman, I have come across. Go Freddie! Congratulations and really well-deserved award!”

This sums up the man, he always has time for new comers onto his farm helping in the training of many of the BQP staff, with his gentle advice and good humour. But accolades are only as good as performance so let's acknowledge this, with some cherry picking of his wean to finish figures (1000 pigs not all the same batches)

Best FCR = 2.13 : 1

Best Mortality = 1.2%

Best DLWG 984.69 gms/day

His avg performance since 2011

FCR = 2.30

Mortality = 4.5%

DLWG = 823gms/day

The term stockman is often banded about in livestock farming. As the above figures prove to all, Fred is a great stockman and he has succeeded over the years to prove people wrong about buying Shaws farm all those years ago, he's made a great home and farm on those 6 acres through hard graft and attention to detail.

Thank you Fred!



Fred's 50 and 100 batch awards