

UK GROWER MAKES HABIT OF WINNING AWARDS

A farmer who regularly grows Cobb 500 broilers has won one of the top UK broiler awards for the second time in three years.

Robert Lanning, who only began the enterprise five years ago, has won the open award in the under 50,000 sq ft (4650 sq meters) category in the broiler efficiency competition sponsored by Trouw Nutrition and the National Farmers Union. The award, presented by John Farrant, editor of Poultry World, at the British Pig and Poultry Fair, includes a holiday weekend in Paris or Dublin.

His winning entry, based on the average performance of three crops of which 50 percent were Cobb 500, achieved the remarkable European Production Efficiency Factor of 358 and a feed conversion of 1.727.

One of the judges, John Farrant, comments: "It is encouraging to see young men such as Robert Lanning coming into the industry with enthusiasm and rapidly acquiring the skills to be among the best broiler growers in the country. Robert has proved his consistency by being among the award's highest achievers on EPEF in two of the past three years."

Robert has always wanted to be a poultry farmer since he was given six day-old bantam chicks by his father David Lanning, now general manager - agriculture of Lloyd Maunder, one of the UK's leading broiler processors.

He achieved the ambition five years ago when he bought a small poultry farm at Belstone within Dartmoor National Park, one of the most scenic areas of England. There he set up the business of Devonshire Poultry Ltd and grows crops of 28,000 broilers

Since then he has added a larger farm 45 miles (72 km) away at Cullompton with capacity for 130,000 birds, planning permission for one third more and the potential to expand further.

Robert says he prefers growing Cobb broilers because they



Broiler grower Robert Lanning on the farm where his birds have won two top UK awards in three years.

achieve 50 to 80 grams more weight for age, better feed efficiency and have the ability to thrive on a cheaper diet with up to 30 percent whole wheat.

He attributes his consistent success in the competition to attention to detail and particularly the ability to spot potential problems before they develop, such as in monitoring water consumption to detect any variation that could signal a health or management issue.

His broilers are processed at the Willand plant of Lloyd Maunder which supplies high quality fresh chickens to major UK supermarket groups such as J Sainsbury.

Andrew Maunder, director of Lloyd Maunder, says that Robert's success reflected well on both himself and on the company's chick, feed and management practices.

"It highlights what present day chickens are capable of achieving under good conditions and so sets a target for all our farmers," he adds. "The award is a morale booster for the whole company and it should give confidence to our supermarket customers that our chicken production standards are very high."

ROBERT LANNING'S WINNING FLOCKS

49-day weight (g)	Feed efficiency	Mortality	Rejects (%)	European Production Efficiency Factor
3236	1.805	4.14	1.60	349.93
3198	1.772	3.36	0.69	361.57
3303	1.825	2.69	0.81	365.23