

Green Grass Egg Farming Podcast with Daniel OBrien Episode 1

Transcription:

Hello and welcome!

This is Daniel OBrien and welcome to green grass egg farming podcast

This is a brand new podcast. It's something I have wanted to do for a while.

Is a, have a podcast and it is finally happening. So in episode 1 the very beginning right now.

I wanted to share with you a bit of my vision, a bit of my story and also that why I wanted to start a podcast and whose it for. So really the people it's for, is someone that wants to start a pastured free range egg farm or for someone who's already got one and they just want some tips and ideas to improve that. So what is pastured free range egg farm? Opposed to a normal free range egg farm. So in my definition if you go to a supermarket and probably now anywhere around the world and you pick up a dozen eggs and they say "free range eggs".

I've come to realise a long time ago. That doesn't mean much, it means chickens are probably not in the cage. Hopefully they've got access to outside. But chickens eat grass so they've got access to outside. And if they're in a stationary shed where most egg farms will have stationary shed the chooks eat all that grass down and then they're running on dirt, so I call them a dirt farm. Yes, they're free range. Yes, they can go outside most of the time. And they can get a little bit of sunshine but they're not running around on grass not green rolling hills and gentle music playing on the background. So what is a pastured free range egg farm?

Well in my opinion it's a farm that has a movable shed, I haven't found a really good free range egg farm that can keep grass up to the chickens sustainably out of the stationary shed. The only time I have seen it is a very small numbers more hobby farm, maybe like 20 to 30 hens but if you go over a hundred hens, I haven't seen it done. So pastured free range egg farming in my opinion is chickens in a movable shed, that are being moved across the landscape over fields that have, hopefully lots of grass in them. So that's what pastured free range eggfarming is in my opinion.

So I really want to make this podcast for those people if that's you and you're interested on that, you have found the right podcast. Myself will be conducting interviews, trainings, case studies just any tips or ideas to help people farm sustainably, it's something which I

am passionate about. I love growing my own vegies, I love being on the kitchen cooking food and I think the more people can create sustainable food systems? the better.

That's how we gonna change the world, I don't think we gonna change the world by turning out to shutdown cage farms rally and try to shut them down. I think you'd change the world by grabbing an idea and say "I'm gonna take action and do something about that" and I think if I can help you do that? That's awesome! So anyway if your listening and you have no idea who I am. I'm gonna share a bit of my story at about fourteen or fifteen years of age mom and dad got me six chooks, I wanted some chooks, it was just something in me. It's not like I grew up with chooks from 5 years of age, I had some chooks when I'm growing up when I was quite young, and then we didn't have them for about, 10 years or something and it was just something in me, "I wanted some chooks".

Even back then I used to grow veggies and such just love being outside, creating food. So they bought me six chooks and I just fell inlove with it and me being a little entrepreneur back then I'm like, "If these things lay eggs, I could sell eggs" so I said"Hey, this is awesome Its like a business that's walking around eating grass and I give them food and they like give me eggs and I can sell eggs" so I was just so excited to start, just to learn heaps about chickens that was probably when I was fifteen and I got a few incubators and a rooster and then started like hatching fertile eggs and selling those chickens at farmers market, fast forward to when I was about nineteen or twenty years of age.

I got the opportunity to work on a pastured free range egg farm so this was a farm with [movable sheds](#) like I'd just talked about and they move their sheds across the landscape it was a dairy farm and it was just a great opportunity you got "Oh this is someone doing it right" when I was working in that farm and probably a lot of people can relate to this I could see a lot of things. That yes the system, the concept was working brilliantly of having their hens on grass movable shed but the actual shed itself it wasn't heaps user friendly so I sort of had some ideas of "Oh, I'd like to do this myself and do it and do it my way".

I'm sure you might relate to that like you work to someone else you got "oh, if I owned the company then I'd change this and this and this" so it was a few years later when I was about 24 years of age I thought I wanna have a crack at this pardon the pun"I want to start my own free range egg farm" so at 24 years of age, I didn't have a million dollars behind me where I could just go out and buy a farm so I literally approached a farmer and I said "you have got some land, I got this concept with chickens, I wanna like put them in mobile sheds am I able to lease some of your land and come to some agreement?"

Being a farmer who was forward thinking and was very interested in sustainability he's like "yeah, we could work something out" I got some chickens and I got them at day old because the farm is certified organic so if your start a certified organic farm you need the chickens from day old so got day old chickens and growing them up on the farm and just before they started to lay, we end up making a partnership myself and the farmer we owned the business 50 – 50 and around that same time my brother helped me make some sheds 'cause he's got a bit more of it engineering mind than I do so I said "I want

some sheds they need to be mobile and I want some cool stuff in them like I want a [roll away nesting boxes](#) and so that I won't have to walk along the whole length of the shed I want to build it like I want a conveyor belt in there" and I didn't know anywhere in the world who that had done this and when your sort of young and naive you just think you just go ahead and do it. And we did, we may have some mistakes but in that time that's when we built the [chicken caravan](#) and that's when we went on to sell [chicken caravans](#) to other farmers.

I built that business up, was selling eggs all over the place, getting really good feedback and we had the sheds and chicken caravans that we built for ourselves and someone said "you should sell these things to farmers" and the way I look at the shed was I wasn't really looking at the budget of how much it cost to build this shed because I knew first hand after working another farm if you got a shed that is not user friendly and the hens are sitting in there at night and they're pooping and you got dirty eggs and then your washing eggs, you'll spend heaps of money on labor, so I'm like let's just spend the money upfront on a really good shed and then we save it on labor so when someone suggests us selling sheds, I thought they gonna be like \$30,000 I don't know if they would be willing to buy them.

I'd be willing to buy them 'cause I understand and I thought well hang on, we put like a lot of energy into these sheds so we did a little bit of marketing and we sold one shed to farmer browns's free range at Dunedoo that's in western New South Wales Australia and they bought a shed and what that's started for me like I knew what worked on their farm setting up a free range egg farm on pasture from scratch and now to be working with another farm and having sort of chicken caravan out there and getting their feedback of what they do and how they do things differently. It really took my knowledge level to the next level because I think with any farmer you know what works for you but you go to a farm that's a thousand kilometers away and they got different climates and rainfall and their season change different whatever.

And about six months after that we sold another one in to Gippsland Victoria which was probably 1500 kilometers away, a fair distance away and a lot colder climate than where we were at and very windy. So we learnt different things there. Since then we sort of we sold chicken sheds all over the place like to every state of Australia and again like I was saying with that 1st one it really rises my awareness and knowledge of free range egg farming because suddenly I found myself in Western Australia almost in the desert when I get almost no rainfall and starting an egg farm over there and then up in Queensland, Victoria, South Australia, all throughout the country and all different climates and micro climates and also a marketing eggs and such, so that knowledge, Yeah it was just great for me just to learn like I just love learning and to seeing different farms like I don't think I could enjoy anything more than going to a new farm and asking "what's your the rainfall" and hopping on the quad bike and going down the paddock and just seeing their farm. So that's my story and we gonna have lots more stories, interviews, case studies and trainings coming up in future episodes please subscribe on itunes so that you get all the updates and also share this podcast if know anyone else that could benefit from this

podcast or some of our up and coming ones please share that and I'll talk to you on the next episode. THANK YOU