

**Event title:** Direct Sales and Marketing

**Date of event:** Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2024

**Host:** Charlie Watson-Smyth, Padstow Farm Shop ([FNZ Monitor Farmer](#))

Many of the farmers involved in the Farm Net Zero (FNZ) project sell their produce direct to the consumer. Following conversations with these farmers, it was decided that an event on how to communicate the results of their carbon footprints would be useful for them.

On Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May, Charlie Watson-Smyth from Padstow Farm Shop hosted a meeting for FNZ farmers who are either currently selling produce direct or are planning to do so. This event was made possible with thanks to the [National Lottery Community Fund](#) who fund the [Farm Net Zero project](#).

Charlie started by introducing his farm and how the farm shop developed. Charlie then spoke about the process of completing a carbon footprint through the Farm Net Zero project, and how he hopes to use the results to communicate with his customers. We were fortunate to be joined by Henri and Peter Greig of Pipers Farm, a successful online meat box company with suppliers from across the southwest, including some of the FNZ monitor farms. Henri and Peter gave advice on how to build a brand that connects people with their food and the environment it comes from, much of which centred on demonstrating how farms can be part of their local community and ecosystem. Other important advice included ensuring that producers listen to what their consumer wants, rather than trying to tell them what they should want.

Part of the meeting involved discussing the use of social media to share farmers stories. A guide to social media written by Peter Mundy of [Green Owl Media](#) is available on the Farm Net Zero webpages. The guide includes information on how to design a strategy for marketing on social media and what sort of information is useful to share. Some of the farmers are using social media already, and all agreed that it can be time-consuming to look after so this guide should help to support them.

There was then a wider discussion on the level of detail that farmers can share with the public. Many of the farmers made the point that the technical detail of farm carbon footprinting can be lost on non-farmers. This can then make it hard to effectively communicate with members of the public. To overcome this, the farmers suggested that it would be useful to have a document that they can refer people to which helps to summarise the carbon footprint. For example, it could contain detail on how the footprints are measured and where carbon is emitted and sequestered in the farming system.

Based on this meeting, the Farm Net Zero team will work to develop a guide to the carbon footprint process and what the different elements of a footprint entail. One outcome from this will be providing farmers with a resource to share with consumers, thereby helping to educate the public on the climate action that the Farm Net Zero group are taking.