



OXFORD
REAL
FARMING
CONFERENCE

Tell Your Story (Part One)

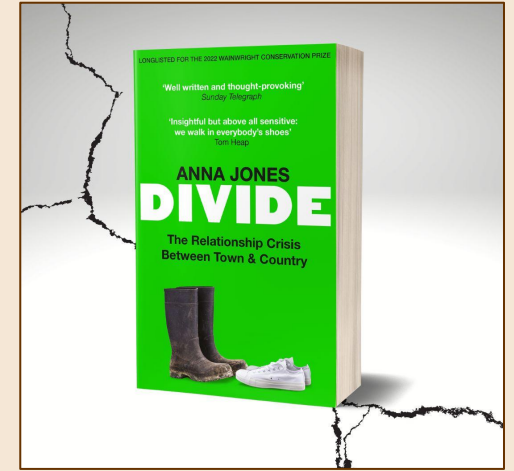
MAKE YOURSELF HEARD

Oxford Real Farming Conference
January 5th 2024





My name is Anna, and I come from a small beef and sheep farm on the Welsh Borders...



I'm also an agricultural and rural affairs journalist, author, television producer and radio broadcaster

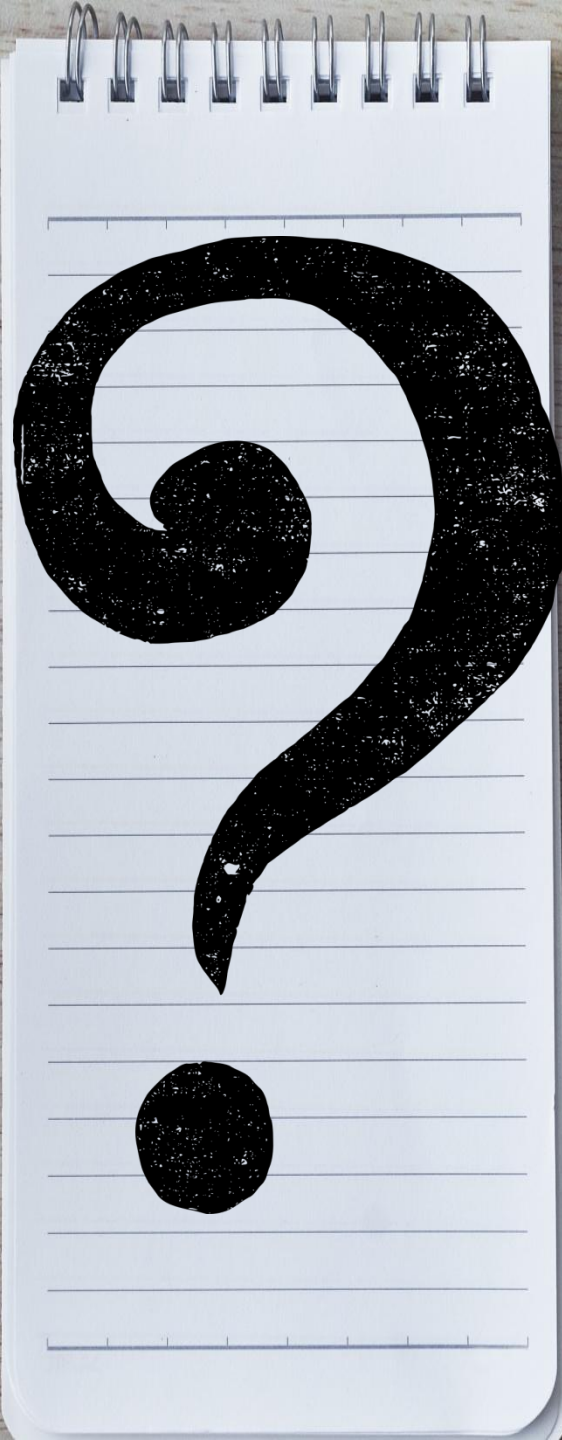
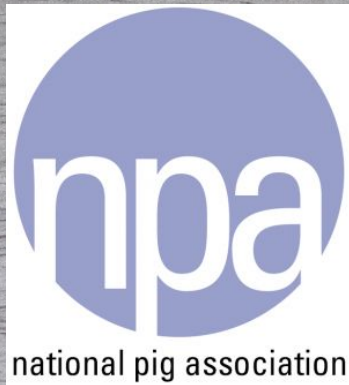




national pig association



RIVERACTION



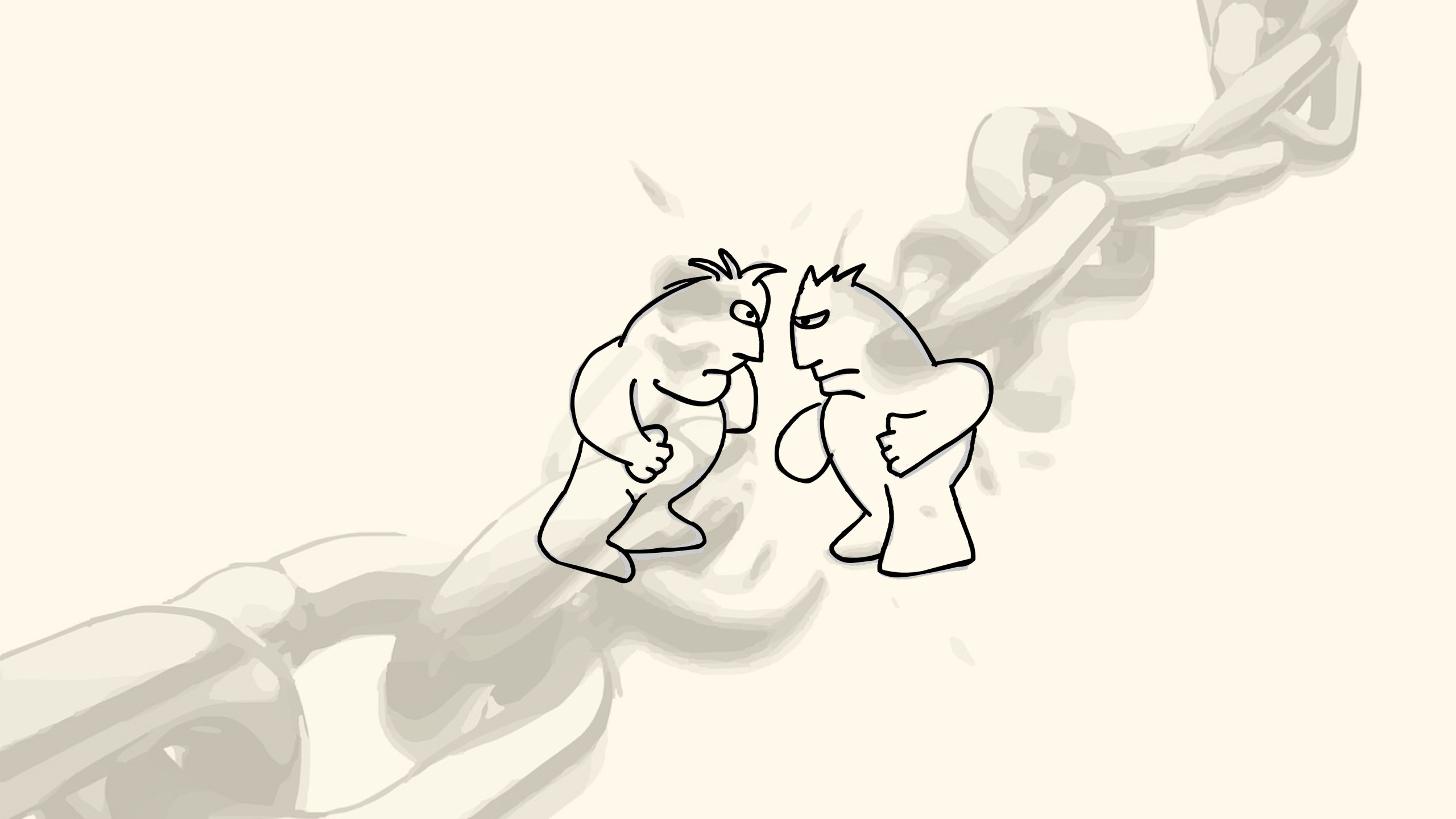


www.justfarmers.org

**Society is too quick to
blame farmers for all our
planetary worries**

**The public perception of
farming is the worst part
of being a farmer**

**I think the ignorance of
food production in this
country is staggering**





**Being quoted in the media
is my biggest fear**

**To me, 'The Media'
means bias, lies and
propaganda**

**It's blood, p!ss and poison
- and they're all the same**

The media is terrifying

THE MEDIA IS
BIASED...



...towards
THE STORY



UNDERSTANDING THE MEDIA

Have you ever...?

WHAT THE MEDIA WANTS

STORIES!

What makes a story?

- New or exclusive
- Peg / hook (the context)
- Angle (different to an 'agenda')

Anti-Bird flu measures in place across Great Britain

🕒 1 hour ago



Bird keepers in England, Scotland and Wales must implement strict biosecurity measures to stop bird flu spreading, the government has announced.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs introduced the measure amid the country's largest ever bird flu outbreak.

It follows regional indoor housing measures introduced last week in Norfolk, Suffolk and parts of Essex.

The risk to human health from the virus remains very low, the government said.

BBC
NEWS



GETTY IMAGES

| Free range geese at a farm in Oxfordshire

By Claire Marshall

BBC Environment & Rural Affairs Correspondent

Senior public health expert at WHO, David Nabarro, warned that should it mutate and become more transmissible, a pandemic caused by H5N1 could result in the deaths of anywhere between five and 150 million people.

It's hard to imagine such devastation.

Writing in the journal *Emerging Infectious Diseases*, scientists said: "If this virus acquires human-to-human transmissibility with its present fatality rate of 50 percent, the resulting pandemic would be akin to a **global tsunami**."

"If it killed those infected at even a fraction of this rate, the results would be catastrophic."



How Bird Flu Could Become A 'Global Tsunami' Affecting Humans As Outbreak Rages On





PLANT BASED NEWS
disrupting the conventional narrative

What makes a story?

- New or exclusive
- Peg / hook (the context)
- Angle (different to a 'slant' or 'agenda')
- Relevance. Why should anyone else care about this?
- Access (very important for agricultural stories)

Does it always have to be negative?

Crisis, conflict and complaint are the bread and butter of news.

But the media isn't on a mission to be negative...

The goal is to grab your attention.

**It's not all bad.
The media also likes...**

- ✓ Triumph over adversity.
Bravery and emotion.
- ✓ An underdog or 'real person'. Authenticity.
- ✓ Strong Images.



AND...

- ✓ Politics
- ✓ Exclusives / Exposé
- ✓ Easy to grasp solutions to complex problems (*think about this in the context of agroecology*)
- ✓ Animals



The Telegraph

6

Wednesday 6 December 2023 The Daily Telegraph

Features



Meet Bear and Holly, the dogs guarding Christmas turkeys

Bred to see off wolves, the Maremmas now protect a flock of free-range fowl. By Boudicca Fox-Leonard

If you are still unsure what kind of turkey to serve this Christmas, how about one raised exclusively outdoors – under the protection of a dedicated, full-time guard dog?

Bear, a 50kg Maremma Sheepdog, lives outside all year round and works day and night to protect farmer George Ford's 640-strong flock of slow-grown Bronze turkeys. Maremmas are bred in central Italy to live with flocks of sheep and protect them from wolves and other predators, and Ford is one of a handful of farmers in the UK utilising them to operate a full-pasture-raised chicken and turkey farm.

Most free-range turkeys are shut away in a barn at night, explains Ford, a sixth-generation farmer. "That one paddock soon becomes overgrazed and turns to mud quickly," he says. "And you can't give them any more space because you are limited to where the barn is." With Ford's Bear-proof pasture method at his farm – Nempnett Pastures in Blagdon, Somerset – the turkeys are kept within a poultry net that is moved to fresh ground every couple of days. They also don't need to be shut in at night. "We couldn't do that without Bear as it would be too risky for a fox getting through the net."

When Ford first brought Bear home as a puppy two years ago, he put him in a little kennel within the turkey's pen, so they could get acquainted. Now, Bear won't even come into the Ford family home and prefers to live outside. "The most he will do is stand with his paws on the back steps. He doesn't like going inside," says Ford.

There were a few teething problems. "He'd never kill a bird, but he'd run around with one in his mouth. Obviously we had to stop that," says Ford. "Now I trust him totally. He wouldn't kill one of them unless we didn't feed him. He's very good."

Never groomed, Bear's snow-white fur remains surprisingly immaculate and Ford's social media posts featuring the dog generate the greatest engagement.

Bear has since been joined by Holly, another Maremma but smaller at 40kg, who had been bought as a pet and raised domestically by a family nearby, only to be given up. Now the two dogs work together. From April to August they live with Ford's flock of chickens. They are split up when the turkeys arrive in summer and reunited when the chickens go in November. "They play really well," says Ford. "It's nice [for Bear] to have company."

From December to April, there's no poultry at Nempnett Pastures and the dogs live around the farm and the paddocks, enjoying the company of Ford's herd of Hereford beef cows.

This is Ford's sixth year raising turkeys; he started with 120 and has more than quadrupled his production. After six months living on his farm, the turkeys are slaughtered in early December. Nempnett Pastures uses a dry plucking process, which means the birds are legally allowed to hang for two weeks afterwards, helping to develop flavour. Ford mainly sells from his website and to local people, but is able to ship nationwide.

Being outside and being able to exercise means the birds develop beautiful flavours, he says. People love the story, he adds. "And when they eat it, they realise turkey can be juicy and tasty." Bird flu is a concern, but Ford believes raising his birds completely outdoors means they have lots of space and pathogens don't spread as quickly as they would in a barn.

Ford has turned the family business upside down in recent years. After the Second World War, the farm intensified production, concentrating on pig farming. "It was really intensive factory farming. And I hated it," says Ford. "With processes and supermarkets squeezing the margins, the pigs became so low animal welfare. We had to lock the sheds up because we dreaded anyone seeing it."

In the modern farming world, Ford says, "you either need lots of animals in sheds or lots of acres." With only 150 acres, Nempnett Pastures is small by modern standards. But Ford was determined to find a way to farm more sustainably and ethically. When he had the opportunity to move into turkeys and develop a pasture-fed model, he took it. "I wanted to do something that I am happy and proud to show the world."

Today, that involves showing off Bear and Holly with pride. Although you wouldn't want to get too close, Maremmas are fiercely protective. "They are loyal and love my family," says Ford. "When I go down to them, they come running up with a big smile on their faces."

"However, if [anyone else] walked down there Bear would be a completely different dog. He'd be up barking and baring his teeth. It's quite scary. If he doesn't know you, good luck to you."

Keep on rolling board games to sharpen the brain

Glad tidings! Keeping your mind in shape is just a comp... at the World Congress of Neuro... found that regular board game... sions can slow cognitive decli... improve memory, reduce depa... sion and help with quality of li... particularly among older people. What's more they are a godseye at Christmas as families seek to g... Partly fuelled by the rise of board game cafes and people's desire to de-tech their lives, in the UK we are living through a gaming gold age. So here's our pick of the best for Christmas 2023.

James Wallis



Best for memory
Trivial Pursuit (£25-50, Argos)
Faster and smarter than ever, different play-modes and a twist to galvanise the slow-coach



Best for social intelligence
The Mind (£9.99, Waterstones)
A brilliant co-operative game involving numbers on cards must be played in a specific



Best for visual memory
Dixit (£22.99, Waterstones)
Cards are illustrated with surreal images to be paired to clever prompts a premium on story-telling



Best for verbal-linguistic intelligence
Codenames (£19.99, John Lewis)
A fiendishly clever game identifying words from



Christmas Charity Appeal 2023
Visit telegraph.co.uk/2023 donate to Race Against Death

Fast-growing chickens: Judge dismisses 'Frankenchickens' farming welfare case

© 24 May

BBC NEWS

Why you don't need to panic about a Christmas turkey shortage: Farmers on the truth behind bird flu headlines

i News

La storia del cane pastore diventò amico dei tacchini (che grazie scorrazzare felici)

Somerset
County Gazette

Sheepdog Bear protecting turkeys on farm in Blagdon

cna

Chew Valley gets Planting!

SomersetLive

Underground glamping pods could be built on pig farm near Bath

COUNTRY LIFE

Manchester

Evening News

MailOnline

Meet the seven-stone dog who is now a TikTok star for protecting a flock of Christmas turkeys round the clock

Bear e Holly, i pastori
naremmanno abruzzesi che
proteggono i tacchini

DogTime

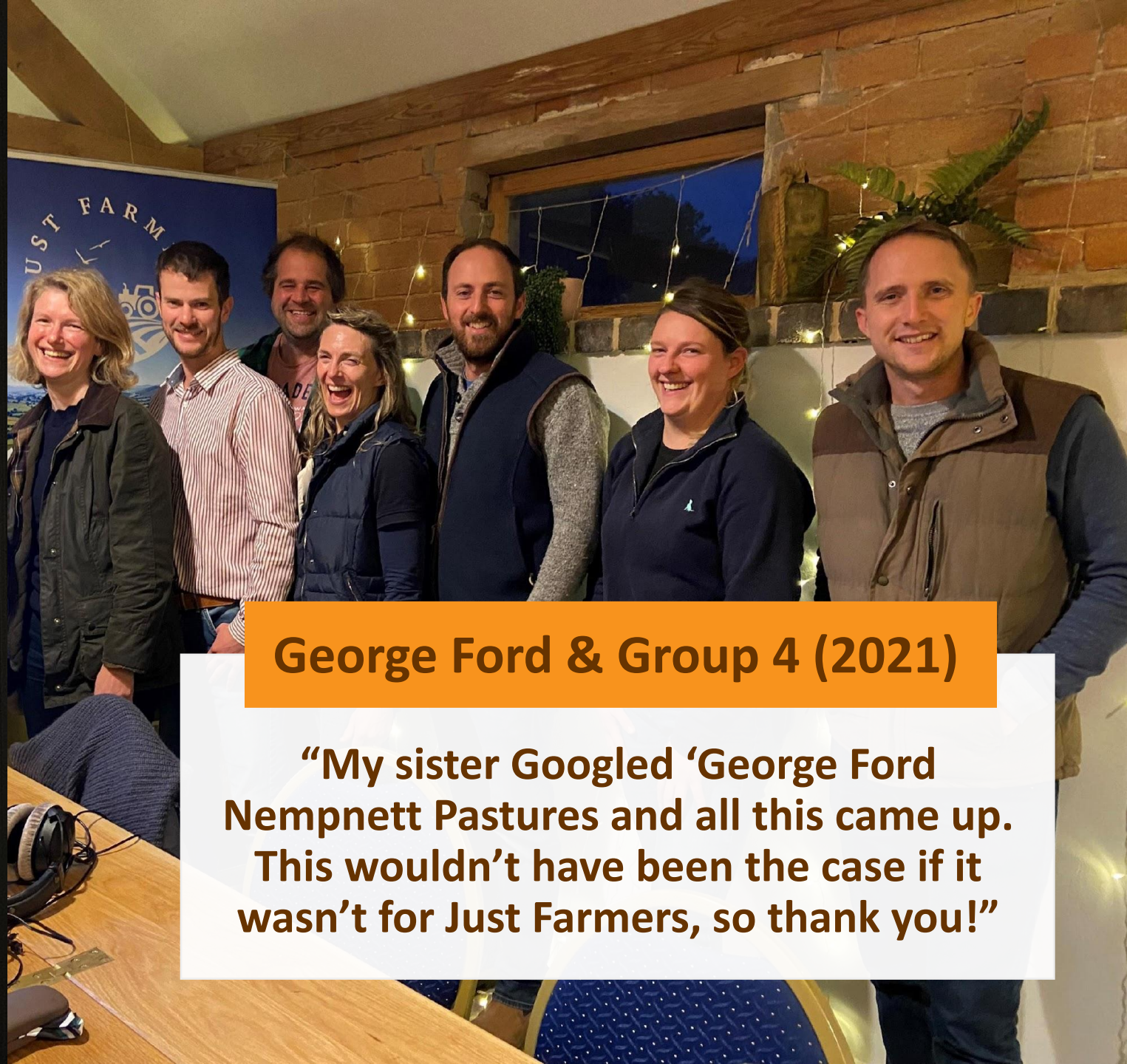
The Telegraph

Meet Bear, the Christmas turkey guard dog

At Nempnett Pastures in Somerset, 640 turkeys are under the protection of a sheepdog with an Instagram following

The Farmers Guardian Podcast

Regen farmers - mixing things up with George Ford & Jake Freestone
The Farmers Guardian Podcast



George Ford & Group 4 (2021)

"My sister Googled 'George Ford Nempnett Pastures and all this came up. This wouldn't have been the case if it wasn't for Just Farmers, so thank you!"

Telling Your Story is not about controlling the media – it's about working with it! Learn how to Play the Game 😊

- ✓ Sum it up in a sentence. Know your topline.
- ✓ What's your angle or hook? Why now?
- ✓ Is it relevant to your audience? Why should we care?
- ✓ Is it new or exclusive?
- ✓ How will your story make the audience feel?
- ✓ How will your story look? Think about location.
- ✓ How will you bring it to life? Think about movement, sound and activity.

**BY UNDERSTANDING WHAT MAKES A GOOD
STORY...**

**YOU CAN OWN YOUR STORY and
COMMUNICATE IT WITH CONFIDENCE**

Your ideas...

**Would you change
anything?**



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