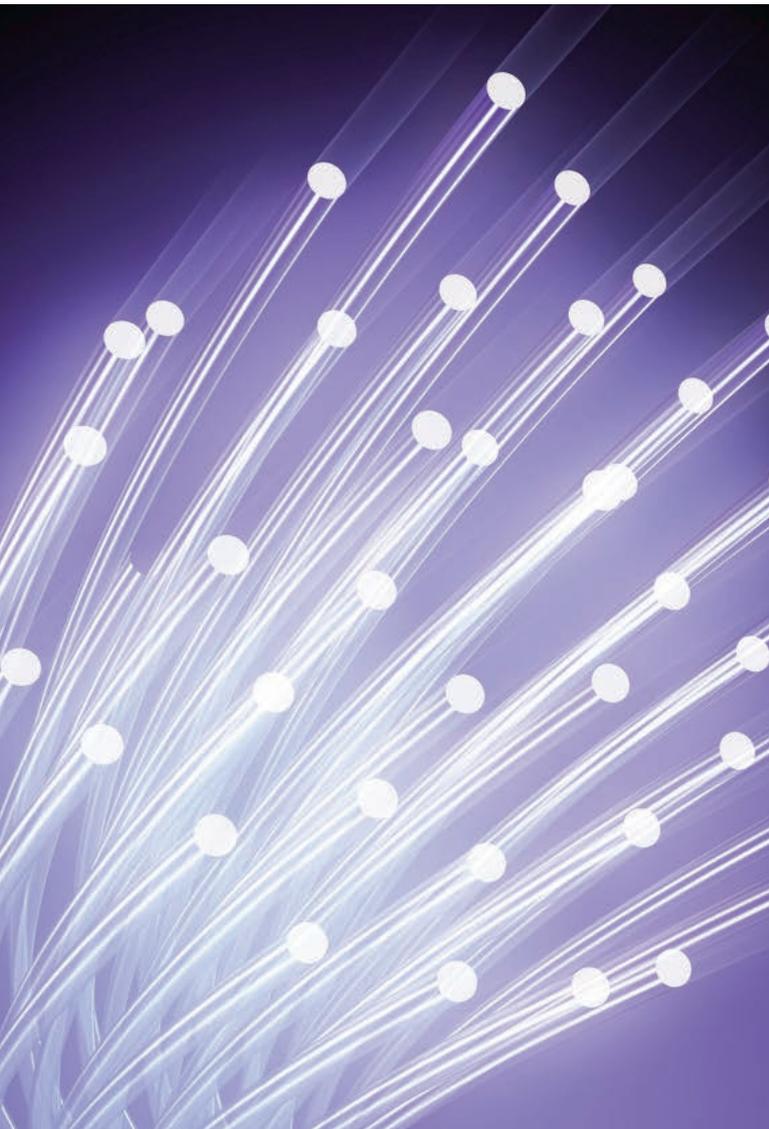




Happy cows go global thanks to fibre broadband



In the heart of the grassy green mountains of west Wales, home-grown cows roam freely. Their premium quality organic milk and dairy products now reach happy customers as far afield as China. **Daioni's** founder and director, Laurence Harris, explains how fibre broadband has helped this most essentially rural of businesses to grow and become a global brand.

daioni.co.uk

Starting small, going green

Daioni started life as a 150-acre farm in north Pembrokeshire. Laurence Harris took over Ffosyficfer farm from his father in 1970, and has expanded the family business to well over 3,000 acres of fertile pasture.

Laurence explains, "When you are a small business, located miles from the nearest town, you quickly find that communications and distribution are huge issues. We started with a single tanker and a couple of lorries, sending our milk to north Wales to be processed and packaged. We relied on our phone and later, on emails to keep in contact.

"Dairy farming is not just a business to me. I've always been concerned about the negative effects that intensive agriculture methods have on people's health, the environment and the well-being of my cows. We know that happy cows produce better milk!"

In 1999, Daioni converted to full certified organic production. In 2003, in a first for Britain, Daioni launched a range of flavoured organic milk drinks.

"It turns out that the switch to organic farming has been key for business too. It has driven our growth both in the UK and internationally."



Across the country and around the world

“Our business grew slowly but surely. Local schools took up our drinks in place of fizzy sugary drinks, and our reputation grew. We won contracts to supply supermarket chains including Waitrose and Tesco in Wales, and Ocado nationally, as well as smaller retailers across the UK. We fulfilled our first export contract for flavoured milk in 2008.



“Our eyes were opened to the opportunity for international expansion in 2010. The Farmers’ Union of Wales invited a minister from the Republic of China’s Embassy to the Royal Welsh Show, who was immediately impressed with the quality of our produce. We were interested too!

“Different cultures have different ways of working, and you must be able to work how your customer wants. We had to change if we wanted to establish the trust necessary for productive relationships with China. We had to be easily available to talk at any time. We were expected always to have a fully detailed response for any questions, issues or proposals. We were expected to be happy to share and discuss data and information openly, and to listen to their needs. Excellent, fast communications are an essential platform for building trust with international customers.

“We were happy to comply. We only have a small office staff and we now had to communicate routinely with people in different time zones and across the UK. We had to share large data files quickly and securely.”



“We needed fibre broadband to get our business performance up to standard, and also to keep our other costs under control.”

Platform for growth

Through its Superfast Cymru project, the Welsh Government is bringing broadband to remote and rural locations beyond the commercial rollout. “You can’t just ‘pop down the road’ to see global customers, but you can meet, see, share documents and talk with them online whenever you need. We took up a fibre broadband connection to our premises as soon as we could, and we have not looked back.

“Export is now the fastest-expanding part of our business, and there’s no doubt that our superfast communications are making this growth both possible and manageable”.

In 2012, Daioni became the first British dairy company to gain organic certification in mainland China, and, in 2014, opened its own Hong Kong office to focus on sales to the Asia Pacific region.

“We also have new customers in the Middle East, and our exports now account for more than 25 per cent of our turnover.”

Saving time and cutting costs with superfast broadband

Fibre broadband has helped Daioni improve the quality and cut the cost of its communications. Online calling and conferencing services replace expensive international air travel and phone calls. File sharing services provide instant, secure delivery in place of unreliable and slow postal and email services.

“We are going from strength to strength, and now employ more than 20 people. Daioni is still a farm in rural Wales, but we have customers the world over. The combination of happy cows, fertile soil and abundant grass has given us a winning formula for the highest quality milk. Being able to communicate easily, openly and immediately makes our success possible. Our name? Daioni means ‘goodness!’”.



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