David Junghans, Tablehurst and Plaw Hatch Farm Co-op
FULL EPISODE: From Student Farmer to Managing Director

Jeremy Smith: I'm with David Junghans, who is the managing director of Tablehurst Farm, which is a community-owned farm in Forest Row, East Sussex. And, David, I'd like to start off by asking you — if you don't mind me saying, you're a young man — how did you come to be the managing director on the farm here at Tablehurst Farm?

David Junghans: Yeah. You could say… quite a short story really. I came to Emerson College to study biodynamic farm management, which was a three-year course about ten years ago. And in the mornings, we spend our time in the classroom. Afternoon was work on Tablehurst or any other farm.

Tablehurst was nearby. And so I started working there as a student. And once I've completed my training, they needed help. So I stayed on as a farm worker. And then one of the farm managers left the farm. And they needed another manager, so I kind of stepped in. And then Peter Brown went on sabbatical. And they needed a managing director. And so I was managing director for the time Peter was away. And then Peter never came back in that role. And so I stayed managing director. So…

Jeremy Smith: This was when Peter took on the directorship of the Biodynamic Association.

David Junghans: That's right. That's right. Yeah.

Jeremy Smith: How do you think that experience compares with, say, being a tenant farmer on a conventional farm?

David Junghans: Well, I've never been a tenant farmer on a conventional farm. So, I can really… my main experience really is only on Tablehurst Farm and a couple of other farms where I've spent some

time as a student. So it's hard for me to answer that question, to be honest.

Jeremy Smith: But you have some idea of the differences between a community-owned farm and a farm like, say, Simon Waters next door here, which runs with one or two people?

David Junghans: Yeah, I mean…

Jeremy Smith: You've got more than 20.

David Junghans: That's not necessarily because we are a community farm but because we are a biodynamic farm. Biodynamic farms are usually much more diverse and many more people are needed. And there is a huge interest from young people who came as WWOOFers or as apprentices, or as students.

Jeremy Smith: And a WWOOFer is? Could you just explain that term?

David Junghans: That's a program where farms can sign up, and young people who want to have some farm experience or want to travel and see different cultures, different countries, and different farms can just spend an amount of time there. A few weeks, a few months, sometimes. Yeah, that's WWOOFing

Jeremy Smith: So you've been here for how long on the farm?

David Junghans: Gosh, over ten years now.

Jeremy Smith: And what changes have you seen in that time?

David Junghans: When I came, the farm was in early stages. It had just been running for about ten years in that setup, and was a family-like, pioneering feeling. So the farm was run by one main farmer and then loads of apprentices, and students, and volunteers, and so on.

And since then, there was a need for another farm manager, and another farm manager, and a shop manager, et cetera, et cetera. And so we started to see the need to become a bit more professional, and organized, and differentiated, really. And so that's really what has changed.

The spirit hasn't changed at all. It's still over 20 people, I think sometimes over 30 people now. Families are starting to establish. It's actually becoming more and more vibrant. So we haven't lost the spirit, but we're trying at least to become a bit more professional.

Jeremy Smith: The land and the buildings are owned by St Anthony's Trust. The farm business, as such, is owned by the Tablehurst and Plaw Hatch Community Farm Co-op. But both Tablehurst and Plaw Hatch have their own board of directors and management teams. A fairly complicated ownership structure. How is it for you working within such a structure?

David Junghans: Well, as you say, it is complicated because at the moment, we are not all sitting around the same table at the same time. So there might be meetings with the Trust. There might be meetings with the Co-op committee. So I think communication can be an issue. But the way it's grown historically, it makes very much sense that it is as it is.

Because I think one of the biggest challenges today is the land ownership

issue, and access to the land for farmers, especially young farmers. And as you know, Emerson College couldn't hold the land or keep it safe. So it's been transferred to a local trust.

And they've been looking after it ever since, and do so in the future, I assume. It gives you a lot of security. And our experience, our relationship, our working relationship with the Trust is very, very good. And the Trust's purpose or aims is really to keep that land as safe as possible for a sustainable farming method and for training for the long-term future.

Jeremy Smith: And is it something that you would see as a model that could work elsewhere? Or is it unique to our situation here in Forest Row?

David Junghans: I could see it as a model that could work elsewhere. I think, if you think of the local communities their relationship is to a farm. That's why CSAs work often so well. And already, the relationship of the community to a co-op, to an IPS, or to a co-op committee as you know, is a bit more tricky.

It's not as exciting, not as colorful. It's a legal entity that allows us to do what we do. But the real relationship is with the farms. I think it makes sense to have a group, in whatever way, that looks after land in community ownership. And then the community relates different to farm businesses, that we can…farm businesses making use of the land. So it does make sense to have that separation. I can see that working in many places.

Jeremy Smith: And Tablehurst has the land and buildings that

St Anthony's Trust owns. But you also are renting land from other local landowners. How does that work out?

David Junghans: It's very difficult. I mean we are still very privileged to have a couple of quite good landlords who understand our ethos and try to support us as much as possible, and not trying to maximize their profit. But as soon as you start renting land from landlords who do not understand our ethos and do not have a relationship to what we do, they will try to maximize their profit.

And then it becomes very, very difficult to farm the land in a sustainable way. Because then we do have to look after our profit. And at the moment, of course, have to look after our profit. But there are certain compromises that we don't want to do. And so maximizing profit isn't the first thought that comes to mind when we make decisions.

Jeremy Smith: What are the compromises that you aren't prepared to make?

David Junghans: The needs of nature, the needs of the animals that we work with, are real needs. And if you want to run a farm, an organism, in a sustainable way, then we have to look at that first. Also, the needs of the people that work there.

And so, of course, that, you know, is in conflict sometimes with maximizing profit. So we try to, you know, get by and make enough surplus to improve and reinvest. But we still want to meet all the needs from nature, animals, and staff as far as we can.

Jeremy Smith: So you're working with a strong ethical attitude, that the land should be farmed in a certain way so as not to overstress the land,

so as not to push the animals beyond the limits that are natural for them.

David Junghans: I mention it again and again. The word is ‘agriculture’ and not ‘agribusiness’. And the cultural aspect in farming is very important to us. And I always compare it to education. If you want to educate in a good way, then you look at the quality aspect and not at efficiency or maximizing profit. the same with farming. You cultivate nature in the same way as you cultivate a child or help it to cultivate.

Jeremy Smith: Yes, absolutely. So is it something about the way the land is farmed that appeals to the local people, that makes them feel this is something they wish to support? On the other hand, would it be possible to have a community-owned farm that was run in what we call conventional agricultural terms?

David Junghans: I don't think that the certification makes a difference. It's the intention of the people doing what they're doing that makes a difference. Whether that is certified biodynamic, organic, or not certified at all, it's not the primary issue or the first issue.

Of course, when we talk about different farming methods, I would be an advocate for biodynamic farming. But when we think of community farms, as I said, it's really the intention behind it. And I think you have to separate or distinguish between producing the highest quality or to have an industrial type of farming and maximize output, really,

I've seen very small-scale, non-certified farms in southern Germany, which have grown traditionally. And they do things with a real passion and with real love and have very, very good produce. I would advise them not to use any pesticides or fertilizers and do differently.

But I think their intention leads to a very, very good product. And that's what biodynamic farming is all about: to achieve the highest quality, the highest vitality in food. But, again, with the right intention, you can come quite far with all kinds of methods.

So, I don't think community farming works in an industrial setup because people are too expensive to be included in that. But it works in many other setups. I don't think it has to be restricted to biodynamic farming.

Jeremy Smith: Does it matter if the farm doesn't own all the land it farms?

David Junghans: I like the concept that land is in community ownership or in some sort of ownership where it can't be used for anything else so it's safe for the future. And I think it's probably safer in a charity like St Anthony's Trust than it would be if it would be on our balance sheet and the farm and the community would own it.

Because we would start borrowing against the land, obviously, because that's what the farm has to do. If you want to build a new barn, you are unlikely to have the cash readily available to do that. And in the past, the Trust has borrowed against the land. And, we are very grateful because we could really make big steps in improving the place.

And that has changed now, which is a good thing. And it brings new challenges that we are trying to meet at the moment. How do we have access to affordable capital in order to make necessary investments? And I think that process in itself is enriching. Yeah, it's a good process. So I don't think the farms necessarily have to own the land.

Jeremy Smith: What would you say to a young person who wants to set

up their own market garden or their own farm today when land is so expensive, when it's treated as a commodity? What would be your advice to such a young person?

David Junghans: Try to develop relationships with local farms that are there already. And see if they can somehow cooperate. For example, we have the problem that demand is increasing steadily, but we cannot just increase production all the time within the boundaries we have set ourselves. At the moment, we are in a relationship with a landlord nearby who wants to remain a farmer, but needs help.

And we need sheep. We don't have enough land. And so we start working together. And I see that as something that we help him to get the business running. And at some point, there will be a young farmer that can take that over as an employee. And then we have still the benefit of a local producer who produces exactly what we would produce.

Jeremy Smith: So it's a win-win situation.

David Junghans: I think it's a win-win situation, yeah.

Jeremy Smith: Going beyond the land, what are the particular challenges that face farmers on community-owned farms today?

David Junghans: Well, there is this ownership of the land issue. I think that is a massive issue. I think the whole concept of community farming in different ways, CSAs and so on, is becoming more and more popular, because they create access to the land and to farming for their local communities.

And their local communities you know, there's always in the beginning people who are interested in food they can trust, in having a relationship to how it's being grown, and to the animals on the farm, to the farm itself. But then you get more and more people coming because it's, you know, another destination for weekend.

So in our case at least, because we are so close to Brighton, to London, to the A22 here and so on, we get a lot of traffic. We pick up a lot of traffic on the weekends. Yeah, there are more and more people coming that are actually wondering where is the bouncing castle, and, you know, and the petting zoo, and so on. So for us, that's a challenge. I don't know if for others that is a challenge.

Jeremy Smith: As a farm which seeks to be an open farm you get a lot of visitors. Seven days a week?

David Junghans: Six well, seven days. Yeah, we are not open seven days a week. We are open six days a week. But we do get visitors seven days a week, yeah.

Jeremy Smith: What is that like for people like yourself who live on the farm?

David Junghans: Well, I think we need to open seven days a week. And then we always have staff on site who are, you know, responsible at that moment. And that means that the people who do actually have a day off can have a day off, which is not the case at the moment.

You do have to, kind of be on the lookout and make sure that people don't jump into pens with the animals and all these things that happen. Quite interesting things.

Jeremy Smith: There's also an issue with some irresponsible dog owners, I understand.

David Junghans: Yeah, that's particularly an issue here. But I think in the U.K. generally, with footpaths and the love for dogs. In other countries, that is not such a problem, I think. But, yeah, here we do have a problem.

Jeremy Smith: Yes.

Jeremy Smith: And that's with dogs worrying sheep?

David Junghans: Yeah.

Jeremy Smith: Have you thought at all about becoming more of a destination, of becoming an actual tourist attraction?

David Junghans: Yes. Not with entertainment, but with education in mind.

Jeremy Smith: So it's important for you that the farm remains a proper working farm.

David Junghans: Absolutely. Yeah.

Jeremy Smith: But that you are open for people to come and find out more about what it entails.

David Junghans: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, nowadays, there are farm shops everywhere. You drive down the A22 here and you have four, five farm shops on six miles or so. And then you go in there, and you actually realize that it's not a farm shop. It's a shop that sells some produce from

small producers.

But you know, it's not a farm that produces for their own shop. I think at the moment, we produce more than 50% of what we retail through our shop we produce on the farm. And we're trying to increase that all the time

Jeremy Smith: I imagine that, you know, farm staff who are trying to get on with their work might sometimes find it difficult to also pay attention to visitors and their inquiries.

David Junghans: Yeah, that's just… it's a question of scale and how you prepare yourself for that. I think you can be a destination. You can be open for visitors. You can have a café, all kinds of things. You can create nice walks over the farm and still stay true to being an honest, biodynamic working farm.

I don't see a contradiction there. I think actually it's enriching for the people who come because they see something real, whereas there are lots of farms that turned into destination without doing serious farming anymore. And their farm shops are stocked with all kinds of produce, but they're definitely not being produced on that farm.

And people don't get a feel for what farming is, really, when they go to these farms. It's a completely different concept. And I can understand that people do it. You own the land. It's very hard to make a living with farming. So people start renting out units for, you know, businesses. They start campsites. And they become just destinations if they're in the right location.

So it's all quite understandable, but it doesn't help people understand

more about farming and about food production. And I think that's what we are really about. And that's absolutely necessary nowadays.

And it's great. The celebrity chefs have done great work to kind of make people more aware of the importance of good food, and good quality, and how they can assess it, and how important that is for their health. But then people need access to farms to actually experience that. And there are not so many places where they can go.

Jeremy Smith: Over the years that you've been on the farm, have you noticed any changes in the attitude of visitors to the farm, customers to the shop? Are they becoming more conscious of some of the issues that you mention the celebrity chefs have been raising?

David Junghans: Yeah. Some people. And then there's a lot of people that come that are very conscious because of their own health problems and issues. And people change their diets. And they expect you to cater for all kinds of different diets. And, you know, everything needs to be gluten free and so on.

So we actually do a lot of work. But it starts always with the people themselves when they have experienced health issues. I think that is where their awareness really starts. I'm not working in the shop. I'm not meeting customers so much. You know, more meeting people coming from different colleges, for example.

Students, agricultural students, and so on. There, the awareness is definitely changing, drastically, and you can see the organic market, the increase. Even during the financial crisis and so on, there's an ever-increasing demand for organic produce.

And I think it is really the future. The challenge will be that it doesn't become an industrialized organic farming system doing the same, like conventional farms have been doing on a large scale without any people actually on the farm other than a few machinery drivers, operators, but with an organic label on it. Because that's what I try to say in the beginning: It's the intention of what you want to do and the scale that makes the real difference. And if you ask, how people experience the farm when they come to the farm and what is the spirit of a community farm, it is that there are a lot of people working with passion, trying to do, the best for the land and trying to produce really, really good food.

And they experience that. And you could have, in theory, a 10,000-acre biodynamic farm with a few operators. It is in theory possible. It also wouldn't have the same spirit. So it's really the scale and the intention of the farmers that matters.

END OF SECTION 1

Jeremy Smith: So would you say that there is a limit to your growth, or the growth that the farm would be prepared to contemplate?

David Junghans: Yeah. Yeah. I think it's very important that people still have a relationship to most parts of the farm, no matter who they are, whether they are just a temporary helper in the café or whether they are one of the enterprise managers. And you still need to sit around a table. And you still need to have personal relationships. And so as long as you can still have a meeting where everyone can sit around a table, I think you are okay. If that starts to be pulled apart, then I think it becomes tricky.

Jeremy Smith: So it's keeping it to human scale?

David Junghans: Yeah.

Jeremy Smith: One of the things I know that you do at Tablehurst is that you have breakfast together and you have lunch together. Is that an important component of keeping the farm with this sense of everyone being involved?

David Junghans: Yeah, absolutely. It's I mean, we do it because we run a care home. And we have three young men with learning disabilities there. And they spend the whole day on the farm. And we are their family. And so that's why we started having lunches and breakfasts together.

And it means that it's not a job you go and work, and then you go for your lunch break somewhere, and then you come back. Work and your personal life's boundaries somehow kind of are a bit blurred. And so it becomes a lifestyle.

And within that, it has its own, you know, challenges and issues, of course. But your attitude to what you do changes through that. By the way I'm very interested in SEKEM Farm in Egypt. Don't know if you heard about it.

Jeremy Smith: I'm interested, too. I want to get the young man who's currently running the farm over here to talk at Emerson.

David Junghans: Helmy Abouleish, I think, is his name. Yes. I haven't been there. I've spoken once to Ibrahim Abouleish and once to Helmy Abouleish at a conference in Dornach, but I've watched some YouTube videos of them and read the books by Ibrahim Abouleish.

And they are rather big. They have several companies like for textiles and, you know, all kinds of things. And they have many, many smaller biodynamic farms in Egypt producing for them. But on SEKEM Farm, which is quite a big place now, they must have, you know, more than 200 employees at any one time there.

They do meet up every morning in a big circle. And so they do manage at that scale still to kind of keep a certain spirit up. So I'd be quite interested to maybe that will prove me wrong, you know? That you can actually scale up even more. But I don't know how that actually works and how much relationship people still have.

Because, I mean, if you think of a farm at a certain scale, let's say, you know, 10,000 acres again, and the production, if you have the same diversity that we have, it's impossible to be involved in each steps of production, from, you know, cultivating land to selling the produce in the shop or processing it for the shop or the café.

And that means you start losing the relationship. And then you have, let's say, something like quality control in between, which is great. It makes things a bit more professional if you know, if you actually have a quality control, an official quality control system.

But you might have a farmer, someone doing quality control, somebody doing processing, somebody doing retailing. And then it becomes very difficult to bring these people together. And then the outcome will be a very different product. Like let's say, you know, you can get a really good meal, mass-produced and vac-packed and then you heat it up at home.

Still a good quality. It'll be different to what your grandma produces with

the same ingredients. Why is it different? It's the same ingredients, the same process, almost. But one is cooked by a person, and one is part of an industrial process.

Jeremy Smith: And one is presumably produced with love. And the other one…

David Junghans: Well, maybe that's the difference.

Jeremy Smith: Yes. So, what are the plans that you have for Tablehurst over the coming five or ten years?

David Junghans: Well, you need to understand that the farm still benefits from people that put a lot of effort and work, and volunteers, and so on, that give their expertise for free and work much longer hours than they should. And that's how it works.

So there is this extra you know, extra 20% that everyone has to put in to make it possible and successful. And, of course that can't be a long-term business model. And so what we have to do is we have to scale up certain parts of the farm. We have to improve the infrastructure.

And increase our production, which is absolutely possible. We have a lot of young farmers. And we are all learning and so on. So there's a lot of improvements can still be done. And to bring the farm into a situation where we can actually pay salaries that allow people to live, to rent, or to buy here in the local community. Become an attractive employer so we can, provide perspective for the people that work with us. So I think that is very, very essential. Because a business model can't just be based on good intentions and the hope that somebody will come and help out.

At least that's my personal view. And in our particular case, it's really improving the infrastructure. And then we can kind of increase our scales, slightly. And I think then we'll be fine. And once that has been accomplished, I think the farm is a very representable model for community farming. And I would really like then to kind of reach out more. For example, the relationship between landowners and farmers, there is no good link there that can bring these two together. That's something where places like Tablehurst Farm I think could really kind of help.

Jeremy Smith: So find new ways of developing community amongst landowners and the farm.

David Junghans: For example, a lot of people sell their farms. And then you get people moving in from the city. And they are working in London, let's say, during the week. And then the weekend, they are there, and their families are there, and they have their horses, and so on.

But they have far more land than they need. But they don't understand the needs of the farmers. And without bringing the landowners and the farmers together, and we could, possibly facilitate these things. There needs to be a meeting point where the mutual understanding is created and where you can sit around a table.

And I think that will help access to the land for young new farmers. We are we currently have three apprentices. We usually have four. And once they are done with their training, we can't take them on. Because we can't just increase our staff levels all the time.

So they need to find something else. And they really struggle to find something else. When I graduated from Emerson College, I was in touch

with several landowners. And they were all interested in me farming their land. But they were interested in profit.

They were interested in all kinds of things. In prestige. But they didn't understand anything about farming. They destroyed infrastructure. They wanted to keep the subsidies, which are for the farmers for very good reasons. As long as the food prices need to stay so low, farms need subsidies.

So there's no understanding and no formal relationship there. And I think there's a lot we can do in the future. And so it's really reaching out into the wider community, and helping to improve the situation.

Because we are, if you look at the U.K., we are in quite a dire situation. Average farmer is around 70. A lot of farms are in family ownership. Of course if the sons and daughters are not interested in farming, it's a wonderful asset that you can sell. Or you can do all kinds of things with it. But where are we going to produce our food in the future? And how is it being produced? And how can we provide a real perspective for new young farmers?

Because farming at the moment is not an attractive occupation. It means long hours and very little income. And a lot of farmers start in a caravan. In a mobile home, you know? New farmers. Farmers who have not taken over their family farms. And so, a lot of good people that would take up farming don't see a prospective for them and do something else.

Jeremy Smith: By contrast to what's happening in a lot of conventional farms, Tablehurst is attracting, as you've mentioned, young people who want to come and work here. You've got families starting on the farm,

children being born. How do you see the future for those families and their children in terms of the farm being able to provide them with what they need in order to send their children to school, to get the material goods that most families seem to want? Is that going to be a struggle for the farm to meet those needs?

David Junghans: We are just in the beginning there. And of course, I've thought about it. I know what I have to do on the farm in order to improve our situation and then improve the situation of the people who work on the farm, in the long term. So I think… but I haven't spent too much thought in it, because I think we are very much dependent on the local community and people understanding what we're doing, the value of what we're doing, understanding that food has to cost a little bit more money.

I wish there would be a way of measuring the health benefits and what we actually save for the national economy if, you know, there would be hundreds of farms like Tablehurst Farm and people would adopt a healthy lifestyle and have access to produce like that.

So, I think it'll work out somehow. But if I focus too much on this now… I mean, it's easy to focus on individual needs and my needs, and the needs of the people I work with. And we are very aware of that we have to do the necessary improvements.

And then, there will be a trickledown effect. But without the local community, and their willingness to buy our produce, and their willingness to, let's say, maybe support us by lending us money, by maybe acting as a guarantor if you want to borrow money from elsewhere.

There are lots of interesting ways of how they could support the farm and improve the long-term situation. So this communication between us and the community is something that will have to be, I think, in the near future reestablished.

Because at the moment, well, you heard from Peter Brown, about the early days and how the spirit was there. And there were, you know, a group of 20, 30 people who were very close to the farm and really had the feeling, "This is our farm."

Whereas now, the farm is for many years now running quite, you know, steadily and quite well, and is increasing its you know, what it offers to the community. And people even-even though they are owners, they come as customers. So we have to rethink how we reestablish our close link with the… or a more active relationship with the local community.

Jeremy Smith: I was going to ask you about your understanding of the word ‘community’. Has the term as you understand it changed over the years? And does it need to change again?

David Junghans: Well, I don't think that in the beginning I really understood what it meant to be honest. Because I came here to study at the college, and then went to the farm, and just worked day and night, really. And I didn't know who the community is. So it was a little bit abstract because I wasn't born here. I wasn't brought up here. And I also haven't had much time to actually interact with the community. Back then, we worked sometimes 70 hours a week.

So the community are the people that come to the farm, really. So that's what it was for me for a long time. Now, as managing director, of course,

you establish more and more relationships with the community. So for me, it has changed. My perspective has changed. But I don't know if the community has changed.

Jeremy Smith: When I was speaking with Peter Brown earlier, he talked about concepts that, for example, Patrick Holden of the Sustainable Food Trust has brought forward, this idea of true cost accounting where farms have to — or should have to — pay for the true cost of all the inputs. And it seems to me that what he was suggesting was that there is a huge educational need both in terms of people understanding the true cost of what conventional agriculture is, and what the true cost of food should be.

But there's also the need to have government change its policies to encourage a much more healthy approach to farming and eating. And I was wondering, is this something that has to be done at grassroots level? Or should there be a campaign nationally to try and change people's minds?

David Junghans: It's a difficult question. I think most things happen on a grassroots level, really. And then at some point they get enough publicity, so it becomes public awareness grows, really. I understand the difficulties — or I can imagine difficulties — of our politicians nowadays. First of all, they often don't know. And they have to rely on their advisors or lobbyists. And so whether a national campaign will help, I don't know. I think what helps is direct experience.

And of course, we can reach out to 600, 800, you know, 1,500, maybe a few more people. That's what we can do. Maybe, something like that. An interview, or a little documentary, or a book that has been published and

so on, you reach a few more people. But I think the direct experience is absolutely important. Because most people only learn from experience.

Jeremy Smith: That implies that as a farmer on a community-owned farm you have a wider remit than just your farming. You also have this cultural remit of explaining what you're doing and trying to help people to understand what the issues are.

David Junghans: Yeah. When it comes to politics the problem is, there is one issue at a time is being dealt with and one policy at a time. But it actually needs many people from different areas — policy makers, farmers, traders — sitting around a table.

And it needs a holistic approach. And unless there is a way of doing that, I can't see the right policies being made. And so, what we have, we have an holistic approach on a very, very small scale. And that works. And then, you know, I can talk to the local community.

And we can kind of take several things into the equation when we talk about things. We could, sit down with, let's say, the local supermarket, a few of the local landlords, and so on. And so that's all possible. And a national scale or international scale, that's, of course, much more difficult. But, yeah, my hope for the right policies… I'm not very…

Jeremy Smith: You're not holding your breath.

David Junghans: I'm not holding my breath. But I think, as you said, on the grassroots level it's market forces, market dynamics that change things most easily. Because everyone reacts to it. And you know, the organic movement is a real movement of success.

I mean, it's been 30 years ago when organics farmers or the organic movement has been seen as somewhat, you know, some weirdos, really. And now, it's a respectable business, really. And it's billions, you know, a year in the organic sector.

And I think the community farming — the relationship of the communities to their farms, to their land, to their environment, to food — this is really something that-- has to be multiplied, something that we do here. And I'm really grateful.

I mean, I, you know, I haven't done much to bring this about. It's been others before me. I'm just making sure that, you know, it continues, really. But if that could be done again, and again, and again. And there is a growing awareness that we can't just be consumers.

We can't just be spectators in this world. We have to become actively involved, that's what it takes, I think. Then policies will… policymaking will be changed by that, at some point.

Jeremy Smith: You mentioned earlier that human-scale farming is important. Globalization is something that reduces us by contrast to passive consumers or spectators feeling powerless in the face of these huge forces. If that is the case, and if our community farms have a way of counteracting that tendency, what does that mean for people working on the farms? Can they cope with the additional tasks of interacting with their local community and helping to educate them? Or is it the responsibility of the local community to come in and help the farmers with these issues?

David Junghans: It's in their interest. I mean, I'm not doing — well, I'm

doing, because it's, you know, such an advantage, personal advantage for me to do that. I'm working because I believe this is necessary. It's a benefit created for the local community.

And so it is in the interest of the local community that this can continue to work like this. So, of course, the local community are also landowners, local business owners. The local community are all sort of people. It's not just customers.

Yeah, so, as I said, we all have to become active. You know, when gosh, I don't know. I was still… '95… how old was I? Can't remember,,, anyway, I in Yugoslavia, 1995. Former Yugoslavia. I saw footage. People, you know, you'd think war means, you know, people die because they, have been shot or whatever.

But the biggest problem was food supply. And that's, something that probably always happens when you have civil wars. But it made me aware of that people living in cities give the responsibility of their food supply to other people.

And, of course, we work in that way nowadays, that we have to do that in some respect, division of labor, really. But it's such an important issue. I mean, it's not just food supply. It's our environment, our air, our water. All these kind of things are affected by farming and can be destroyed by farming or can be improved by farming. So it's very important that people get actively involved in that again and just don't leave it up to others.

I like the idea. You know, we have a small allotment scheme program on the farm, mainly for parents and their children. And I like the idea that everyone, like it used to be not that long ago for most people, actually

know how to grow food.

It's an essential skill. You know, people are so, nowadays, helpless because they give all that responsibility away to big corporations. Even education. And it's so important that we kind of take charge of this again as communities.

Jeremy Smith: David, it's been a fascinating discussion. Thank you very much indeed. And very best wishes for the future of Tablehurst Community Farm.

David Junghans: Thank you, Jeremy.