



The Danish Agricultural Working Environment Award

2014





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**Cleanliness and order
are of major importance
on Sandagergaard**

The 2014 Award winner



Sandagergaard near Skals in the North-Western part of Denmark receives the Agricultural Working Environment Award 2014. Gunnar Forum and Solveig Klith Forum run the farm, which they bought in 1989.

The farm has two branches of production: milk production and forage production. The land comprises 350 hectares with corn, grass and grain. The dairy herd: 450 cows with an annual yield of 13,000 kg ECM / cow.

On Sandagergaard Gunnar and Solveig have five full-time employees at the moment, and one of them is a first-year student. In addition to providing the employees with great influence on the daily operations, Gunnar and Solveig try to create the framework for a good working day, so that the staff is both motivated when they come to work, and when they go home.

Staff:

Janni Harder: Responsible for calves

Steffen Sørensen: Responsible for feed mix and fieldwork

Søren Henningsen: Responsible for hoof trimming, reproduction and heifers

Jakob Skov: Farm manager and barn responsibility

Anders Nygaard: Student

Gunnar Forum and Solveig Klith Forum run the Sandagergaard together with five full-time employees.

The Danish Agricultural Working Environment Award

Every year the Knowledge Centre for Agriculture presents the Danish Agricultural Working Environment Award to a farmer who makes a special effort to create and develop a good physical and mental working environment on his farm.

The recipient of the Agricultural Working Environment Award is a farmer who performs the task with skill, dedication and creativity and by his example shows new ways and inspires his colleagues.

The Award consists of a diploma and DKK 25,000. The awarding has been made possible with the help of a number of sponsors. See the list of sponsors on page 7.

This year the jury consists of:

Ole Carstensen

Consultant Doctor at the Department of Occupational Medicine in the Region of Southern Denmark

Niels Vestergård Salling

Farmer and Chairman of the Agricultural Working Environment Committee

Tormod Overby

Special Adviser, Working Environment

Helle Birk Domino

Health and Safety Manager, Knowledge Centre for Agriculture

Joint responsibility and freedom create results and job satisfaction



“
I have a feeling that
it is mine as well. It’s
a great feeling.”

*Janni Harder,
responsible for calves*

Like his colleagues, he is wearing a blue sweatshirt with his name printed on the chest and blue Kansas working trousers.

“The clothes with the farm name and our names strengthen the feeling that we are a team and together we make things work,” says Janni Harder.

Openness is a key feature at Sandagergaard. The barn, which was built in 2008, is light and built in such a way that you can see both from one end to the other and across the building. In this way the employees can see each other and every one of them knows what their colleagues’ work is all about.

“In this way we can see each other all the time. We also know each other’s working tasks, so we are able to help each other and understand that a job may sometimes drag on. Then you do not get irritated and think: “Why does it take such a long time?” says Søren Henningsen, farm manager and in charge of reproduction, who has come along to one of the barn’s two spaces with milking robots.

“We have seven of these all together. In actual fact it is one too many in proportion to the number of cows, but it increases productivity”, Gunnar points out.

“After we had robot number seven installed earlier this year, our first lactation cows have increased their production by seven kg in daily yield,” says Gunnar and goes on, “Recently we reached 13,000 kg ECM. That we have come up this much is not only due to technology, but to the fact that our staff has joint responsibility for the production. They take part in the

There is a lot of laughing and loud talking at the breakfast table in the farmhouse on Sandagergaard. Around the table are Gunnar and Solveig and the five farm employees.

“We always have our morning briefing in the farmhouse although we have a staff room in the barn. It is important that our employees feel at home on the farm,” says Gunnar Forum and is interrupted by a phone ringing.

“Sorry. It was someone who would like to work here.”

That they have managed to create a homely atmosphere is confirmed by one of the Sandagergaard employees when she presents the staff room in the barn.

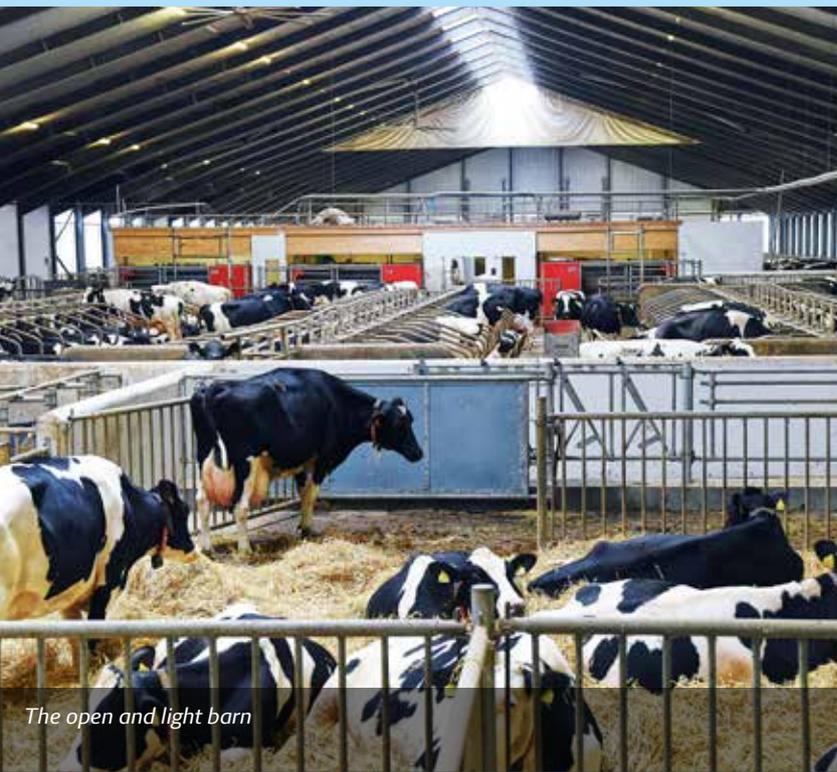
“Sometimes I invite my family and friends to come and visit me because I want to show them what we are creating here. I have a feeling that it is mine as well. It’s a great feeling,” says Janni Harder, responsible for the calves.

“Here are no expenses spared, for Gunnar is not afraid of investing in employee welfare and well-being. We have both a microwave, coffee maker, refrigerator and a bathroom. So you could actually live here,” says Anders Nygaard, first-year student, with a smile.





The cows are driven into the treatment box along a runway



The open and light barn



Containers with chemicals are transported on a sack trolley



There are seven Lely robots on Sandagergaard



> discussions of next year's budget for the yield with the feeding consultant. We share a common set of objectives for the farm, and in this way we share the responsibility that we will succeed."

Jakob Skov, responsible for the barn, agrees and mentions other benefits of his employer's delegation of responsibilities and tasks. "It means we are not dependant on Gunnar, and it gives us freedom to plan our own work. It helps to make Sandagergaard a great place for employees. And when the

employees are well, the animals are well," says Jakob Skov.

As an example of animal welfare, Søren Henningsen mentions the hoof trimming.

"We lead the animals up to the treatment box in a quiet and controlled manner along a runway. This makes the animals enter the box without any problems. At the same time we are safeguarded against injuries from being crushed, stepped upon or kicked," says Søren.

Another example of safety is the use of protective personal equipment. We have safety glasses, hearing protection and gloves in stock where this is needed. To want to take care of oneself and each other is part of working here", Søren adds.



We set the targets together and therefore we have joint responsibility as well.

The separation between animals and staff at the runway is one of the safety measures that have contributed to not having had any industrial injuries on Sandagergaard for years. And that the employees' welfare and health are held in high esteem is confirmed by Janni Harder after feeding milk to calves.

"I do so with a milk taxi. It facilitates the work because I do not have to bend down and pour one litre of milk in each bowl. The milk taxi is one of the many great tools here on the farm, which help to ensure that you are not completely worn out after a day at work, but have some energy left for the family when you come home," says Janni Harder, before she begins to wash the floor in the calf kitchen.

Gunnar Forum, the owner of Sandagergaard

Cleanliness and good order is of major importance on Sandagergaard.

"It is a guarantee of hygiene, reduces the risk of infection and facilitates the work," says Steffen Sørensen, head of the feed mix and fieldwork, and provides an example. "Each tool is marked with a piece of tape in a specific colour which shows where in the stable it belongs. When we are finished using a tool, we always clean it and put it in place. In this way we avoid, for example, having to spend 5 to 10 minutes finding a shovel. In the same way we see to it that hearing protection and safety glasses are placed where they are needed. All these small things count in the end," emphasizes Steffen Sørensen.

In addition, it is the plan to create a new, levelled silo plant with an earth wall along the outside wall and a walkway between the silos complying with the precepts of course. "We would like to have the external height of the silos reduced by two metres to increase safety.

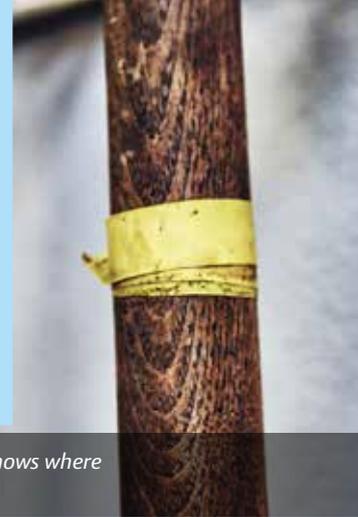
The drawings are ready", says Gunnar.



Feeding calves using a milk taxi



Every tool is marked in a certain colour that shows where in the barn it belongs



The impressive calf kitchen



It is a matter of course to wear personal protective equipment when it is required

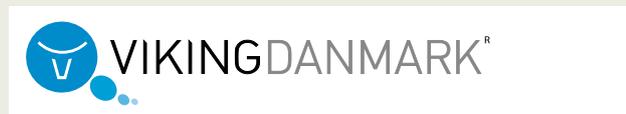
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