

Appendix 5 – interview outputs

This table provides a summary of the transcript for the interviews conducted with James Brown (Pollybell Farm), Dave Cragg (Natural England) and Douglas McMillan (Green Restoration Ireland)

Interviewee	Question	Answer
James Brown Pollybell Farm Landowner, farmer & horticulture businessman (vegetables and salad)	Do you farm on lowland peat?	Yes
	Describe your involvement in farming/agriculture.	Landowner, farmer and horticultural businessman (edible horticulture: vegetables and salad)
	Have you ever farmed/grown cranberries in this country? If you have describe what you did.	No.
	In your experience, do you think that cranberries represent a viable crop that could be grown on lowland peat in the UK? Please outline your reasons.	Yes, because it is done elsewhere in the world because lowland peat management is going to change and there is now (due to climate change and the need to reduce emissions) an opportunity that was previously not available. Single farm payments (leaving CAP) has meant that there is no longer the requirement for farmers to farm in the traditional way. It is a compromise between full peatland restoration and productive farming.
	What do you see as the main barriers to cranberry production in the UK?	<p>If there is a business opportunity a an efficient farming enterprise will find the barriers to the agronomy.</p> <p>Main barriers to explore:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Frost: predicting and managing crop when there are late frosts which could affect buds and fruiting. In Chile they use wind turbines in reverse to blow warm air over the crop. Fleece could also be used. 2. Equipment: however any technical barrier but may be overcome if it is worthwhile overcoming it will be overcoming. 3. How do you get to a critical mass quickly enough to make the business profitable.

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Knowledge of how to grow it, the risk of the lead time in. Takes around 3 years to get a good crop. 5. Understanding and deflating the existing imported market. How may cranberries be provided cheaper. How are you going to scale up and make it viable for market? 6. Weeds, herbicides would need to be replaced with a laser weeder. 7. Establishing the market- consumer demand for fresh, dried, processed juices etc. 8. Determining the critical mass of cranberries required by UK retailers to ensure they buy from the UK rather than abroad. 9. Knowledge of the current supply chain.
	Do you wish to expand on question 6?	See above.
	Do you think cranberry production should be one of the following: low inputs, high inputs or organic?	Low inputs since there are questions surrounding the organic industry. C & environmental footprints would need reporting on. Lows input is a more resilient model.
	Would you be prepared to be involved in a trial to establish the feasibility of cranberry production?	Yes
	How might public finance or private finance for public goods (carbon, biodiversity, water quality) support the profitability of this crop?	<p>When a retailer sees you are being paid via public/private finance they will not pay you as much and will negotiate hard on the price and so it may not be profitable. If you are going to go down this route, you might as well focus on ecosystem services.</p> <p>The issue is the monetisation of the Ecosystem Services at scale, current finance mechanisms are immature.</p>
	Other comments	<p>The key barrier is going to be profitability. There is a need to establish if there is a demand with market research.</p> <p>You need to provide a supply for 12 months of the year.</p>

		<p>Use the cranberry as the star ingredient rather than the main one as it affects the grower less?</p> <p>Find out which manufacturers are using the dried cranberry.</p> <p>Tell the story to aid marketing.</p>
Dave Cragg Natural England Advisor Shropshire Hills National Landscape	Do you farm on lowland peat?	No
	Describe your involvement in farming/agriculture.	Primarily peat focus is through Natural England "Peat for the Planet" strategic project in the north of Shropshire, but at a county level and with farmer cluster groups on a Local Nature Recovery Strategy basis.
	Have you ever farmed/grown cranberries in this country? If you have describe what you did.	No.
	In your experience, do you think that cranberries represent a viable crop that could be grown on lowland peat in the UK? Please outline your reasons.	Yes, climatic conditions are favourable so it seems viable. Seems unlikely to compete on equal terms with larger and established production (such as in Wisconsin) but could be a novel or higher value crop as an addition to other public goods delivery (water, carbon etc.) especially over sphagnum. There may also be a place here for an alternative crop on land prone to flooding where conventional crops (wheat, potatoes etc.) are proving difficult.
	What do you see as the main barriers to cranberry production in the UK?	profitable production; agronomy; harvesting techniques/machinery requirements;
	Do you wish to expand on question 6?	The establishment of a market for the UK crop to compete in terms of it's better environmental credentials (and so at a premium price). There is potential for such a crop to go beyond the good standards of production to link benefits of peat management for carbon and water, and the link with Christmas and/or other themes that can command a premium price may be possible.
	Do you think cranberry production should be one of the following: low inputs, high inputs or organic.	Low inputs.

	Would you be prepared to be involved in a trial to establish the feasibility of cranberry production?	Yes 8. The challenges would be establishing the market for fresh, dried cranberries and other products such as juices.
	How might public finance or private finance for public goods (carbon, biodiversity, water quality) support the profitability of this crop?	Through funding the additional benefits of growing cranberries as an alternative to a conventional crop where there are resources such as peat to manage in a more sustainable way.
	Other comments	It'd be good to stay in the loop with developments and understand more on whether cranberry as a crop can sit within a wider restored peat body (an incentive for some productively minded landowners to restore peat but continue to produce and recognition of the need for the UK to continue to produce food).
Douglas McMillan & Bastiaan Molleman Green Restoration Ireland https://linktr.ee/greenrestorationireland info@greenrestorationirelandcoop.ie	Do you farm on lowland peat?	Involved in lowland peat farming in Ireland
	Describe your involvement in farming/agriculture.	<p>We run the Farm Carbon EIP, where (mostly) peat pasture farmers are encouraged to undrain portions of their land in exchange for carbon credits. We advice on alternative farm management of the rewetted land, as well as whole farm measures for carbon sequestration and biodiversity improvement.</p> <p>2 main farms, A shop window with a bunded cells (8x10) divided into 8 for different crops and one for biodiversity with cranberries.</p> <p>And a Larger one, cut over peat. Planted sphagnum and want to plant blueberries and cranberries into it.</p>

	<p>Have you ever farmed/grown cranberries in this country? If you have describe what you did.</p>	<p>We've planted one or two cranberry plants at one of our rewetted sites. It is cutover bog, next to a degraded raised bog. The site has been rewetted successfully, with the cranberries standing close to a pond. The soil water level cannot be more than 20 cm below the surface in summer, given the water level of the adjacent pond. Plants seem to be doing well and gave berries in the first year of planting.</p> <p>No but growing in Ireland. Farming cranberry varieties from Wexford: Early black Pilgrim McFarland</p> <p>Also lingonberries. Planted crops and got a provisional crop.</p> <p>Farm Carbon Project in Mayo(2018) -persuade farmers to raise the water table. Bastian completed a peatland code to determine the carbon available to protect.</p> <p>Farming peat grasslands as a reversion and also marginal cut over areas -tying to support small farmers and provide Paludiculture crop options. Aim to allow farmers to diversify Deep permimeter drains around bog, below level of peat into clay. Blue clay taken to make bund and then fill in with peat.</p> <p>Bord na Mona has control of large areas of peat that they could use for large scale cranberries but Doug is interested in small scale.</p>
	<p>In your experience, do you think that cranberries represent a viable crop that could be grown on lowland peat in the UK? Please outline your reasons.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>The answer in question number 4, in combination with what I've heard (admittedly mostly hearsay) about the cranberry company (Bart Crouwers) in the Netherlands, suggest to me that it could be.</p>

		<p>They are growing organically, btw.</p> <p>Low intensity – needs a story to tell and needs to bundle with other credits. Planting into sphagnum.</p> <p>High intensity - perhaps.</p>
	What do you see as the main barriers to cranberry production in the UK?	<p>Water management.</p> <p>Frost not an issue, as Ireland warm.</p> <p>Weeds have been an issue on occasion but the areas they are planting the cranberries are not that high in nutrients.</p> <p>Profitability needs to be proven. Proven supply lines. What stays with the farmer and what is incorporated into the supply line.</p>
	Do you wish to expand on question 6?	Using the example of the cranberry company in the Netherlands, it seems that they manage to overcome most of the above. Water management in the Netherlands is more straightforward than elsewhere because the country is pretty level, so this might be more problematic in the UK (and Ireland).
	Do you think cranberry production should be one of the following: low inputs, high inputs or organic?	Organic, low inputs.
	Would you be prepared to be involved in a trial to establish the feasibility of cranberry production?	N/A
	How might public finance or private finance for public goods (carbon, biodiversity, water quality) support the profitability of this crop?	Through funding the additional benefits of growing cranberries as an alternative to a conventional crop where there are resources such as peat to manage in a more sustainable way.
	Other comments	It'd be good to stay in the loop with developments and understand more on whether cranberry as a crop can sit within a wider restored peat body (an incentive for some productively minded landowners to restore peat

		but continue to produce and recognition of the need for the UK to continue to produce food).
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