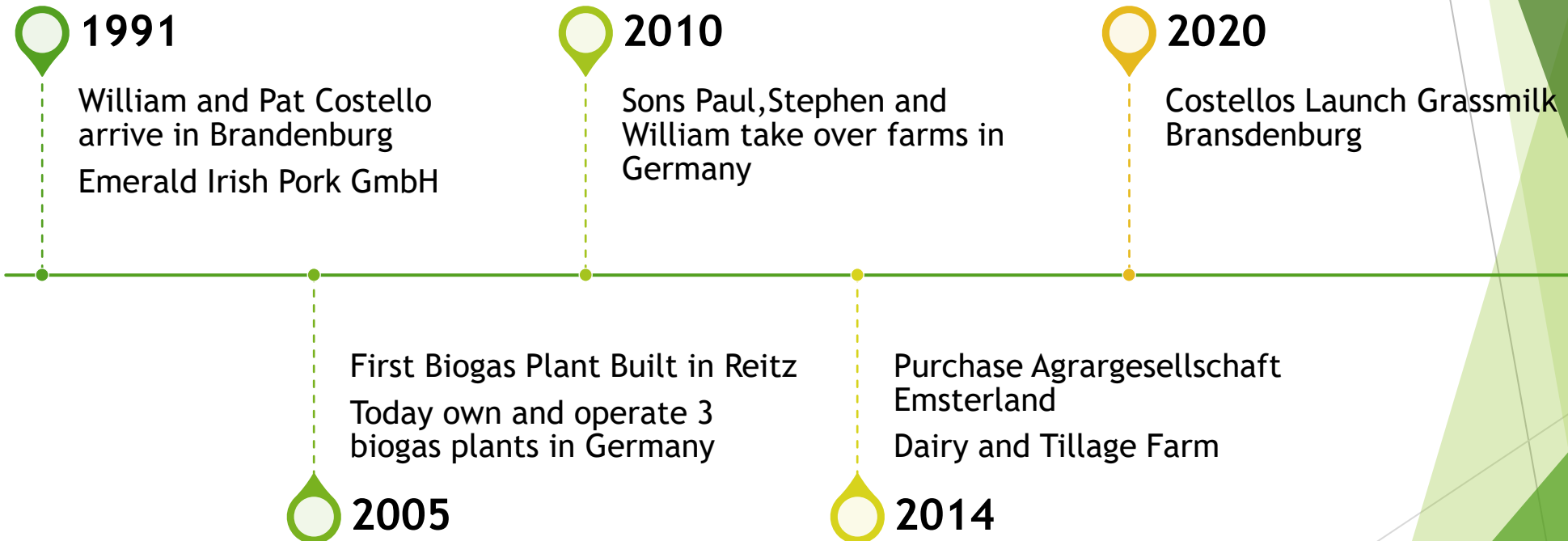


Taking grass-based dairying to
continental Europe - and
proving some doubters wrong.

Paul Costello

Nearly 30 years farming in Germany





Where we farm in Germany

- ▶ Farming in Land Brandenburg
- ▶ 600mm annual rainfall
- ▶ Large scale compared to Ireland but low yield
- ▶ Developing region for agriculture with great market potential.
- ▶ Berlin strategic advantage for marketing
- ▶ Arable land mostly sandy
- ▶ Grassland mostly peaty wetter land

DAIRY AND TILLAGE FARM

- ▶ We are a 1500ha farm only 1 hour from Berlin. We were milking 400 cows indoors.
- ▶ This proved to be very costly with feed and health and infrastructure.
- ▶ We moved herd outside and switched to a New Zealand model of dairying
- ▶ We switched from Holstein to Jersey Cross.
- ▶ We also switched to a spring based system with a spring calving block to meet our grass growth.
- ▶ We started producing 'real' grass milk
- ▶ We are able to produce a unique artisan product.

IT WON'T WORK !!!(because)....

- ▶ Grass wont grow in Germany
- ▶ Germany is too cold in winter
- ▶ Germany too hot in summer
- ▶ That's not enough milk to be profitable
- ▶ Cant calf so many cows in a short time
- ▶ Manufacturer will not buy your milk if its seasonal.
- ▶ You will need 10 people to bring the cows in and out
- ▶ Cows will run to Poland
- ▶ What about the Wolf!

Yes it can if you....

- ▶ Growing between 10-12 tonnes of Grass per year for last 3 years
- ▶ Use the cold (dry winter as an advantage not a negative)
- ▶ Hot summers make enjoyable work
- ▶ Prove them wrong (better cost per litre than how many litres)
- ▶ Correct planning and organisation calving is over before you know it
- ▶ Never a problem for manufacturer they are huge
- ▶ Only one person and a quad required
- ▶ Not yet anyway ;) Thanks to good fencing
- ▶ Another problem we will solve

Keys to success

Correct Cow

LIC Genetics

Small cow
(horses for
courses)

Health benefits
Hybrid vigour

Seasonal calving

Match the
lactation curve
to the grass
curve

Efficient use of
labour.
(organised
chaos)

Grass management

Know what you
are growing
to plan ahead

Max milk from
grass

Thank you very
much for your time



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