

Farms chief bids a fond farewell to growing business

I BID all readers farewell after 11 years leading the Co-operative Farms.

The farming business was struggling to find its role in the Co-op Group when I joined it, yet now it is integrated with the food business and more than two thirds of its turnover is into the food stores.

The business is highly regarded in the industry, we are attracting the best graduates from the agricultural colleges and are able to compete with the best commercially. I leave the business in good heart with another commendable profit performance.

Environmental

However, there is still a lot more to do. Just keeping ahead in farming techniques, reducing our environmental impact and trying to influence the EU and how it implements the next stage of CAP Reform mean the farming business cannot stay still.

I believe there are great opportunities for using the message of our farming business to consumers: the 65,000 children who have been through Farm to Fork farm visits are great advocates of the Group.

I feel particularly proud that in my last week we captured (on a webcam) barn owls in two of our specially built barn owl boxes at Down Ampney and an otter in back in the holt at Coldham.

Farming is a long-term investment — or, as they say in our industry, live as if you will die tomorrow and farm as if you will live forever.

Making sure there is food on our tables, despite a burgeoning population and increasingly affluent society seeking more meat and dairy in their diets, is the role of farmers the world over.

I am very proud to have had the privilege of running such a brilliant team as

we have in the Co-operative Farms and wish them — and all in the Co-operative Movement — all the very best for the future.



CHRISTINETACCON
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THE CO-OPERATIVE FARMS

Letto

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TSSA will fight for s

I SUPPOSE it is not surprising that first of USDAW (the shop workers comes to the campaign against the shops operated under the Co-opera Thomas Cook brands, but not look obvious meant that the the article in issue was unbalanced.

I am sure it is true that USDAW to save jobs in the Co-op outlets, b do to ignore — even in passing — union is also involved here: the Tr Staffs' Association (TSSA), which Cook staff as it has for a great man

If that union's campaign is anyth as it was against branch closures in they will make a very considerable the campaign. Yes, the two unions groups of staff affected, but it does anyone to ignore the existence in a union involved in the same struggl

Lloyds acquisition is in the country's best interests

I WAS delighted to read in the Christmas edition of the *News* about the Co-op Bank's potential acquisition of Lloyds Bank assets, a deal which could take the Co-op up to a 7.6 per cent share of the current account market.

This is fantastic news, not only for the Co-op Movement but also for the public, who have seen bankers at the big shareholder banks play fast and loose with their hard-earned cash.

I know that this deal would also be welcomed by many of my constituents in North East London, where the lack of affordable credit has driven people into the

a secure home for their money. As a supporter of the Co-op Party's The Feelings' Mutual Campaign, I was sad to hear that Northern Rock was to be sold off by the coalition. But this exciting news of the Lloyds acquisition demonstrates that the campaign for responsible finance continues apace. Let's hope 2012 signals the start of a revolution in the ethics of the banking sector.

You can find out more about the Co-op Party's The Feeling's Mutual Campaign by visiting: www.thefeelingsmutual.org.uk

Step up div to commur

NOT made a New Year's resolutio International Year of Co-operation?

How about reviewing the amoun each direct to our local communitie contributions to community funds v collectively aim for a 20 per cent g hard-hit communities, to help repla through Government spending cuts

The Co-operative aims for 20 mi 2020. Perhaps The Co-operative co