

English wine in the Dragons' Den

14 Jul 2010 by Richard Hemming

22 Jul - See [here](#) for yet more detail.

16 Jul - See [here](#) for what happened on the programme.

Tonight in the UK sees a new series of the TV investment programme Dragons' Den with the first episode featuring an appearance of English wine.

Geoff Bowen, owner of Pebblebed Vineyards in Devon, went on the show to seek investment in a new project he is launching. 'Pebblebed was founded 10 years when I joined with 10 friends to plant an eight-acre field with vines,' Bowen says. 'Now, there are 22 acres planted and 20 families involved, so there has always been an emphasis on communality here.'

He went to the BBC with a similar idea: to expand the vineyard area of Pebblebed by starting a new company that encourages active participation from its shareholders. The exact details of the pitch – and the all-important verdict of the Dragons themselves – will be revealed tonight on BBC2 at 9pm.

Regardless of that result, Bowen has a determined vision to 'allow people to get involved with the exciting future of English wine.' He explained his latest thinking, which is an evolved version of the Dragons' Den pitch, whereby investors can buy a 3% share in the company for £4,000. The dividend will be 200 bottles of wine per year – although there is an additional cost of approximately £5 per bottle to cover maintenance and production for each vintage. Additionally, there is the crucial element of letting shareholders join in with vineyard work, to see and help with planting and harvest and so on.

Bowen pointed out that the exact figures are not exact, but represent the current stage of what is work in progress. 'The 200 bottles per year could be sold as a house wine for local restaurants, or for private drinking,' he added. 'The scheme offers a way of investing and drinking locally, and for investors to visit the vineyard and be hands-on involved. There is also the value of the holding the shares themselves.'

Anyone interested can contact Pebblebed via their [website](#) – and be sure to find out who your potential fellow investors might be by watching Dragons' Den this evening.