

## On The Way – Rodolphe Landemaine, Land&Monkeys

**Introduction:** Today, three quarters of cultivated land worldwide is not used for feeding human beings, it's used to feed animals that are later slaughtered in appalling conditions. And at the same time, every five seconds, somebody in the world dies of hunger.

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BNP Paribas Personal Finance invites you to discover On The Way, the podcast that explores the paths to responsible consumption. Entrepreneurs, people from the world of business and researchers: On The Way gives a voice to those who, day after day, are helping to develop more sustainable consumption. Welcome, and I hope you enjoy listening!

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Hello On The Way, my name's Rodolphe Landemaine, and I'm the founder of the company Landemaine. It's a network of traditional bakeries in Paris and Tokyo. We have some thirty establishments. And more recently, I founded a network of rather unusual bakeries called Land&Monkeys, which are 100% plant-based. And so that's pretty much what I'm going to talk to you about today. And we also have a start-up called YUMGO that's working on plant-based products, so helping professionals substitute eggs in recipes.

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I was trained at Les Compagnons du Devoir. The idea is that you spend every year in a different city and learn different working techniques and so on, and that takes between five and seven years. In the past it was France-based, and now it's more European. And the idea is that you live in shared accommodation, with between 100 and 150 people.

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And you get to know 20 manual trades. It's more the construction trades: roofers, carpenters, so it's quite rich, socially, and it's interesting because you travel and then you learn your trade. My ecological awakening happened pretty early on, as I was already aware of it at a young age, thanks to my parents, who were already aware of such things.

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I grew up in a vegetarian family in the 1980s, so that was really unusual. I often tell my parents that it was much harder to be vegetarian in the 80s than to be vegan today. I grew up within an ecosystem of subjects that people are talking about today, which we'd already debated around the table back then.

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And you didn't have access to all the information that you have today about these subjects. So we were intuitive vegetarians, as we didn't know whether we were missing anything, people didn't know if it was the right thing to do, to feed a vegetarian diet to children in the past. Whereas now there's a lot of information about that.

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I think the decisive moment was when I looked at these subjects through the perspective of veganism, about ten years ago, after reading a book by Peter Singer called “Animal Liberation.” And so it was tricky for me work in a profession where I’d decided not to consume animal-origin products and byproducts. That was the gateway for me... it all branched out from there, about all different subjects, such as putting less pressure on the biosphere, planetary limits, biodiversity collapse, and all that.

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And when you zoom out, you realise that everything’s systemic and that in the end, what you eat is half an eco-friendly gesture, and that eating vegetarian food isn’t just about animal ethics, but rather it’s about lots of other related positive things. So that was a real twist, thinking “either I sell up everything, and move onto something else.”

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“Or I’ll use the platform of Maison Landemaine to talk about these subjects,” and I was very much aware that my coworkers, the people who work in these areas, in food, weren’t at all convinced about all that, and didn’t think that you could simply plug this initiative into the socio-cultural heritage of French gastronomy.

#### *MUSICAL INTERLUDE*

So, there are vegetarians, vegans and full-vegans.

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Vegetarians basically don’t eat direct animal products: meat, fish, eggs. Vegan also means that, but you also don’t eat anything else animal related either, so no cheese, milk, butter, eggs, etc., and full-vegan means that in your lifestyle, in your everyday life, you choose to not depend on animals, so not even wearing animal based clothes, animals for sport, etc., so no games that involve animals, for example horse racing, things like that.

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So you make a strict choice to avoid living at the expense of non-human animals. About ten years ago, people weren’t debating these subjects at all. And when it was debated, it was like it was a trend, everyone thought that it was a bit like being gluten-free, that it was a fad that would pass. My initial intuition, later confirmed by a number of small studies, was that it wasn’t a fad in the sense that, even when forced to do so, whether people want to do it or not, they’re going to have to adopt an increasingly plant-based diet, due to constraints: constraints on energy and resources.

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Put simply, it costs too much to produce animal protein no matter which way you look at it, in terms of energy, space, resources, and arable land. And certain figures made me certain and convinced me that things were going to head that way. Basically, it takes 10 plant proteins to make 1 animal protein, so it takes 10 kilograms of animal feed to make 1 kilogram of meat.

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So that doesn't work for 7 or 8 billion people, all wanting to adopt a Western style diet based on that way of eating. And in any case, you see that there are constraints on societies in terms of energy and resources, which we saw clearly in 2022, when there were also constraints on water, or with the Ukrainian war.

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So right away we saw a transition happening, towards cheaper animal proteins. For example, you saw people consuming more eggs when they wanted animal protein, but they didn't do that consciously, but rather because they no longer technically could, as they didn't have the resources to buy meat.

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So today that industry is on life support, because it doesn't reflect the true cost of animal protein. In fact it costs a lot, it costs a lot in terms everything I just mentioned. With the constraint that's on its way, with the great energy descent that's coming, and so on. All these subjects, finite planetary resources - there's no stronger lever for moving towards a plant-based diet than by desire, by will, but it's also not by choice, it's by obligation.

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That's going to happen naturally. So in fact I was always convinced that there was just a normal rebalancing that was going to happen. In fact it's always been that way, since our grandparents' era, and before that, people would only eat meat occasionally. And meat, animal protein, will return to the place that it's always had. We've constructed this artificial system that doesn't hold up, that's deadly for animals, deadly for the planet, and deadly for us.

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Because in fact these days, in our Western countries, we don't die from not eating enough, we die from eating too much, and in particular from eating too much animal protein, and not enough fibre or vegetables.

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In just two generations we've gone from eating about 20 to 25 kilograms of meat per person, to around 90 to 100. So about four or five times more. And that's what people say when they work on these things: it's not binary. The thing is not to decide that you're either vegan or a meat eater, an omnivore, it's about drastically reducing your consumption of animal protein, and from time to time you can treat yourself, have a great meal with friends, and all that.

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But out of fourteen meals per week, a true flexitarian diet would be twelve vegetarian meals, and two meat-based meals. That's what works. And I'm going to give you some crazy numbers. Because I don't think it's been talked about enough, because it's about so much money. It's such a crazy business, people don't realise. Ask anyone: what's the biggest business in the world?

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They'll say oil, or computers, that sort of thing. Not true: it's meat. It's a crazily massive business. And that's why nobody has access to that information. The industry's scared of people getting that information. So that's a big barrier to the mainstream media from examining these subjects.

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And for decades there have been organisations working on these subjects, and they've never raised the issue of reducing animal consumption. Today, three quarters of cultivated land worldwide is not used for feeding human beings, it's used to feed animals that are later slaughtered in appalling conditions.

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And at the same time, every five seconds, somebody in the world dies of hunger. So in fact, there's enough food to feed all of humanity, no problem. It's said, somewhat provocatively, that when you take a bite out of a steak, you're taking a bite out of part of the Amazon rainforest, but it's true.

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Currently, deforestation is happening because people want to grow soya or graze animals, to support the still exponential consumption of animal proteins.

#### *MUSICAL INTERLUDE*

People don't think in the same way as when they're 20 years old, and thinking about themselves living on the planet in 40 years' time, as they do when they're 60 and retired, and they're looking back on their past 40 years, and so they don't really care much about these issues.

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So there's a real generational split on these subjects, and it's the younger generations who are coming up with solutions, and who, in a certain way, are teaching their parents about these subjects, explaining to them the relationship between what we eat and the biosphere, as I mentioned earlier.

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And also there are so many constraints on our societies, because of everything people read, but a grain of truth is starting to appear more and more: I'm a perfect example - I maybe wouldn't have had this platform a few years ago, so people who are starting to talk about that link, and therefore are raising awareness.

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But you know, it's like being a teacher, it's educational work, it's about saying the same thing once, and then a hundred thousand times, so that it finally sticks in people's minds. In the past people were told that they had to eat meat to get big and strong. Well now we tell them that they have to eat plants and fibre to get big and strong.

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So that doesn't happen in just one generation. It's such a generational thing. It's very much restricted to a social caste that's become aware a bit more quickly. Because you're dealing with major trends, major sociological issues, you always have to look at the masses. And just because the higher social classes in Paris are now aware, that's a tiny proportion of French or European people, and it doesn't mean that's there's a real change in underlying trends. It's not true. It's just that part of the population is starting to understand, and that's been quick. And that's good news. Because over the past two or three years, there's been a real paradigm shift, or almost, in terms of food.

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Sometimes, it's almost, and I mean almost, that someone who's going to eat meat almost has to justify themselves. And that really wasn't the case three or four years ago. Personally, ten years ago, when I went to restaurants, I'd discreetly go to the maître d'hôtel, and ask if they'd make me a certain dish, because at business lunches, etc., it was difficult to raise the question.

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And in just one decade we've made enormous progress. But that said, you have to look at the masses. And the masses are everyone else, and so you have to see how they fill their shopping carts. And right now, they're far from such considerations. So I've painted a rather gloomy picture, but there's been huge progress, and we French people are maybe a little bit behind, compared to our European neighbours.

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Studies show that in the Netherlands, by 2030, 50% of the population will be vegetarian. 20% of 18 to 25 year-olds in London say they're vegan, and one million people were vegans in 2023. In Germany, almost 20% of the population is vegetarian, or vegan. So out of 80 million, that's a lot of people. And Scandinavian people too.

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We, as the Latin countries, with our very strong cultural heritage, our strong gastronomy, it's a bit harder. But now we getting over those hurdles a bit more, and we're catching up a little. And I'd also like to mention that the initiatives we'll be talking about later, show that we're able to embrace these issues with our gastronomic culture.

#### *MUSICAL INTERLUDE*

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So imagine that in the end we could project these ideas to the baking industry, which is an old and traditional industry that uses a lot of animal origin products. The first step was creating vegan recipes, in 2014 to 2015, that we sold at Maison Landemaine and that we tested, to see how the market would respond.

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So that was with pastries, savoury foods, and then simply all pastries. To see what consumers thought. And I saw an immediate response. In fact, surprisingly, especially among the younger generations, people were happy to find these products in boulangeries, which are really a traditional setting, where you don't often find such new products.

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So I started to think that it might be possible to start off from scratch, with a blank sheet of paper, and build an entire bakery 100% free of animal products, which, for me, on paper, was a difficult thing to get to grips with, as I was trained in completely the opposite way. So it was really an interesting task of deconstruction. And that was funny, as people often asked me in interviews why Maison Landemaine worked so well, and I said that it worked so well because we did everything correctly, and we weren't re-inventing anything.

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Basically we made good croissants, good sandwiches, good cakes, good baguettes, and with good locations, but we weren't really inventing anything. We were just doing our jobs properly. But there we had a very interesting creative period, where, starting off from a blank sheet of paper, for something that didn't exist, we had to rethink the major codes, the major signatures of French gastronomy, into a plant-based form.

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And so here's how we did it. First of all, we decided that we didn't want to be singular, and be a sort of Anglo-Saxon concept. We wanted to be truly French. So we kept the DNA of a French bakery. Second, we did a worldwide audit of what was happening, and I sent some of our chefs, I chose two or three of them, I told them to go and look at everything that was happening around the world, at all the great initiatives around veganism.

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And in fact, we realised that people weren't moving in that direction, because it simply wasn't good. It was really disgusting, and we had to have the courage to say that. Just because something's vegan, just because there are no animal products, doesn't mean that it's good. It quite simply wasn't good. So we said ok, we're going to stay as a French bakery.

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And we'll see if it's possible to make these recipes vegan. We really weren't sure that we could do it. And so we'd use everything in our larder, that we were able to use as products, and make recipes from those. So that's how we did it. For example, for cows milk, there are also 7 plant-based milks. There's rice milk, oat milk, coconut milk, there are lots of them.

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And so we did that for all animal-origin products. And for butter, there are oils. For pork gelatine, that binds recipes together, there's agar-agar, which is algae-based. So we did it like that We put all of those into our larder.

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And then I took on two chefs from Maison Landemaine, and told them to work on it for two years, and at a time when there was nothing like that around. So in fact they couldn't ask anyone how to do it. Which was pretty funny. Because you couldn't just pick up the phone when you were stuck on a technical solution, and call a friend and ask "how would you make this or that biscuit part?" It didn't exist.

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So that was really interesting work. And we were getting over more and more hurdles, and we were getting more and more confident, as it was 2016, 2017, and we were starting to realise that maybe it was technically possible. The hardest part was dealing with the whole savoury side of things.

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The small-scale catering side of the bakery, in fact. Because when you look closely, all the sandwiches in a bakery are made with animal products. It's ham and butter, ham and cheese, tuna, chicken. There are no tasty vegetarian sandwiches in bakeries, there are no quiches, things like that.

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In fact it's always animal proteins. For example, we created a pâté sandwich with a real 100% vegetable terrine, we used lentils, tofu, mushrooms, seasoning, and so on, and we sliced it like a terrine, and we garnished it with pickles. The terrine was really good, people loved it.

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And for example we also came up with some new initiatives, for example pea protein, that we rehydrate and cook, a bit like chicken fillets, that allowed us to make a sandwich that was like chicken, and that's one of the biggest sellers in our bakeries. And then lots and lots of cooking. And as for the rest, it meant wracking our minds, as you can't have 10 or 12 vegetable-based sandwiches, it doesn't work.

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You also have to offer what people usually find in a bakery. So we did a lot of cooking upstream, five or six years ago. And now a lot of start-ups are making our job easier. For example, for our hot dog, we used to make a great hot dog, and we used to use a carrot in place of the sausage, and now we use the excellent vegetable-based sausage that has just come out from HEURA, and other brands that are increasingly clean, using really clean ingredients.

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In terms of taste, it's impossible to tell the difference between a hot dog with an animal-based sausage and one of those sausages. So that meant lots and lots of cooking and creativity, five, six, seven years ago. Now it's still the same, but with more options that allow us to stick close to reality. And today our range, when you look at the display of

sandwiches, quiches, and so on, it's really the same sort of range you're used to seeing, you know, at a typical bakery.

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Savoury accounts for around one third of turnover. It's really prevalent these days in bakeries and small-scale catering. And we couldn't afford to lose those midday to 2pm sales. It was very difficult at first, because there were fewer initiatives, fewer start-ups, compared to what there is now, and so fewer possibilities.

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So that's how we built it up on the creative side. So you're in the world of a traditional French bakery: *éclairs*, *millefeuilles*, *croissants*, the sandwich range, the bread range, and so on. Essentially, the entire world of a high-quality Parisian *boulangerie*, where, roughly speaking, three quarters of the items are pretty similar. Between good bakeries and good bistros, it's more or less the same menu.

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Except that everything's plant-based, and it's not mentioned. Me, what I wanted was to say ok, I'm going to get a hard time about the fact that I'm working on animal ethics, and so on, but in the end we took the opportunity to work on what a retail business in the 21st century is. How do people eat?

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And what exactly is a food business, or quite simply a business? Or a business in the 21st century? So you've got these branching structures, so: 1) Maison Landemaine runs tests, 2) we work on the background, 3) we design the logo with the name, and so on: *Le Grenier à Pain*, *La Cave à Pain*, *Le Pain d'Autrefois*, that wasn't for us.

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We were potentially on the verge of a minor revolution... potentially. I got three brand building and branding experts to work with me, so artists who're a little bit out there, and I asked them to come up with an Anglicism for me, because I'm going to take this brand worldwide. I wanted it to be a French thing, but I wanted to take everyone a bit by surprise.

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And one of them came up with something nice, and said: "Rodolphe, let me present: Land & Man." And I said: "No, but not *Man*, you're going to annoy all the women with your thing, we don't want to sound like the *New Man* of the 90s." But it did have something good about it, and Mathilde, who works with me, gave it to someone else, who tinkered with it a bit, and she told me to come and have a look and tell her what I thought.

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I saw the title Land&Monkeys, it was superb, so good, because first of all it's a name, it's an anglicism. And second, it's a name that's really arbitrary, and contrasts with the bakery. There's land and monkeys. And in fact we're all monkeys, and the majority of monkeys are vegetarian.



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We're great apes, and, historically, vegetarians. That's going to get a reaction. So there was this little nod to our origins: land and monkeys, the earth and us. And there was this lady who came up to me, when we'd opened our first bakery, and she said something I'd been asked 1,000 times, "but land and monkeys..." and I explained it to her really quickly, and she said to me: "but after all, we're not animals, Monsieur."

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She was a little old lady, she was very sweet, and I said "No, Madame." So there were lots of smiles all round, and it was just too cute. And it's true that *Land* is also the first syllable of my name: Landemaine. So that was funny. And that's how we did it.

### *MUSICAL INTERLUDE*

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We also embrace the ideas of restraint, de-growth, all these subjects which apparently are dirty words. What is a business in the 21st century? What are the reasons to grow it? If there are any, that is. So already, there's the underlying thing, there's industry.

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I'm lucky enough to be able to feed people. So in fact, I've got a *raison d'être*, in this world, as I feed people. I'm a baker, and people have to eat. And I'm more efficient. We did an audit with Carbone 4, where we compared a Maison Landemaine bakery to a Land&Monkeys bakery on an equal basis, and we saw that we were 35% more efficient with Land&Monkeys.

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So we're much more efficient, with the same pleasure, with the same business, I'm more efficient with this metric. I mentioned animal ethics, of course. Plastic is a problem. We said no plastic, we'll find a way, We won't have self-service, plate service means going backwards, and so on. There's a problem with sharing value.

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So we capped the biggest salary in the company, with the idea that if there's a problem with pay equity, well we're going to fix that. Of course we're a mission-driven company. And there's the problem of what we do with value creation. Imagine that in the future we're a success story, and we make a billion, and that leaves 150 million euros in profit.

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What do we do with that value? Do we distribute it to the shareholders, or to the founding president, or do we use it for something else? We decided that was a real issue to address. So we created an endowment fund, into which we transferred 20% of the shares in the holding company, and so that endowment fund does something very simple: it uses the share of value created to buy hundreds of hectares of land in France that are left to develop freely.

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It's the principle of *rewilding*, which is basically combatting the destruction of ecosystems, because there's too much anthropogenic activity. We need to restore and regenerate those ecosystems. That's what Claire Nouvian is doing with Bloom for the oceans. We're going to do the same by buying up hundreds of hectares, we're going to privatise spaces, that we're going to leave free of anthropogenic activity.

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So we're doing our bit to reconcile philanthropy and value creation. We've also adopted triple accounting. So looking at a company through the prism of just its financial results is really outdated. There are some companies that make tens of billions in profits, but they're not sustainable. We know they're going to die out.

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Their industries are short-term. But take a market gardener who grows organically on five hectares. Even if they just make €20,000 in turnover a year, it can still continue for 1000 years. It's extremely durable. So we wanted to show that you have to look at companies through other prisms. And so we adopted triple accounting, it's very exciting.

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The idea is to use metrics other than the financial metric. So we chose three: saving carbon, saving arable land, and saving water. These are metrics that you can monitor easily on an annual basis, because if there's data then you can plug that into your balance sheet, to show that while you may be performing less well financially, you're performing very well in terms of these other metrics.

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And then you need to make choices. The idea isn't to be an association, it isn't to seek value, but rather to create it. But if you're also able to reconcile a more efficient business and create value, so as to be able to pay, then you're creating an ecosystem that's much, much more virtuous. So that's how we've constructed the DNA of this brand.

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We're developing this brand as a franchise, so as to move faster. And we explain this to our franchisees. This is how we work. We have some really interesting people approaching us, and in fact people don't just obediently line up just to create value, but they also feel that they're doing something good for the common good.

#### *MUSICAL INTERLUDE*

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So people in the support roles, the people around me when I was working on this topic, they were rather shocked. Has the boss joined a cult, what's he doing? Maison Landemaine is going great, we're going to hit 200, life is good... This is going to be less profitable, vegan products are expensive, the gross margin is going to be a disaster.

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When we opened our first branch, at 86 Boulevard Beaumarchais, between Bastille and République, it was a bakery with a turnover of €550,000, a classic *boulangerie*, with a location that suited me, in the Marais. With a certain type of customer that already had an appetite for these ideas. A bit avant-garde, I'd say. And before we opened, I took the teams to one side and I told them "I don't know what's going to happen, maybe we'll end up closing in three months.

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But anyway, be cool and nice, because you're going to have lots of people being really nice to you, and you're also going to have a few mean people getting mad at you and saying it's French culture, and we've got no right to do this." And in fact, when we opened, we didn't really meet any mean people. Really, everyone who came in was super nice.

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We had people coming from all over Europe, it was really crazy. And we put in a visitors' book, and they wrote little notes for us, it was brilliant. And we've got through three of them in a year and a half. So we took a conventional bakery, we twisted it into Land&Monkeys, and we made one and a half million.

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So then those same people in the company from before, they started to see Land&Monkeys differently. "Ah yes, it's brilliant." And we started doing small financial audits, to get some financial data, and it was really interesting, as I'd had the feeling that it was going to be ultra efficient, for the reasons I mentioned earlier.

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And in fact, it turned out that initially it was the same as Maison Landemaine. It had the same financial performance. We had three times the turnover of the previous business. And we've now developed the brand, we've got five more branches in Paris, so we've now got a mini network of six establishments. And in fact our financial performance is now superior to Maison Landemaine, and so quite significantly superior to a traditional bakery.

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So that's really the cherry on the cake, as it wasn't constructed that way. Why? Because there's also a certain type of clientele who come to us, who consume more, because they like and they support our project. And also we were able to charge slightly more, as it's a concept that's disrupted the market, somewhat. Because we wanted to be close to the bakery ecosystem, and we packaged it that way to sell it as a franchise.

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We're delighted with this initial data, which is better than the bakery ecosystem. That's the cherry on the cake.

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

One more little anecdote. There was a gentleman at our first place, a customer who lived in the neighbourhood, in his sixties, and he came up to me and said: “Oh dear, vegan, I don’t like all that, but I do like you.”

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So that was funny, as I realised that was it, we’d won. In fact, what I mean by that is that people really liked the non-prescriptiveness, the fun, the gourmet aspect that preserves the pleasure of eating, the pleasure we all have, the things we don’t want to give up, we don’t want to give up being with our friends, of eating together. You don’t want to stop going out for a good meal.

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That’s too abrupt, it doesn’t work. So in fact it’s about providing ever broader and more delicious offerings, so that socially, life carries on as normal. And as I said earlier, it’s not a binary choice. I mean, if someone only has one vegetarian day per week, that’s already huge.

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Seriously. It’s not about asking people why they aren’t vegetarian seven days a week. That doesn’t work. It’s about saying, “It’s really good you’re having a veggie day, as that means you’ve already taken a first step.” And it’s like someone who stops smoking, it isn’t easy, and they know it isn’t good for their health.

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But why can’t they do it? It’s because they have all sorts of reasons not to. We’re proud that with our six bakeries, every day there are 3,500 people who are eating vegan, who are enjoying themselves, and who indirectly, almost without knowing it, are having a positive impact. So for example, we make simple calculations to show, for each establishment, how many animals we’re saving every year, how many tonnes of carbon we’re saving every year, how many tonnes of water we’re saving every year, and so on. So every time we open, we can say how much we’re saving every year.

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So in fact the business branches out into all the aspects we mentioned before, and each time they have a positive impact, without it being too abrupt. And so for the rollout of the franchise, we chose Paris, which isn’t the greenest city in the world, it’s a city that wasn’t too aware of this issue, so that’s already a first victory.

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We’re going to move further out, to show that we’re not just for trendy middle class Parisians, and that it also works outside the capital. So we’re going to open in Lyon, Rennes, Aix en Provence, and Bordeaux. And then I’ve no doubt that moving out internationally will be easy, much easier. I’d also like to mention YUMGO, we created it five years ago, it’s a start-up that’s working on eggs, on alternatives to eggs.

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Eggs as ingredients, what eggs are used for in recipes. And if there are plant-based proteins that can perform the same function, then why not? There are a dozen people in the company, and we're active in around ten countries.

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They support professionals and businesses and industries, saying: "you've got eggs in this recipe, we understand their function. And we've got a clean, plant-based solution." It's just types of proteins, peas, potatoes, flax. There are lots of interesting types of proteins. And we customise a formulation for them, so that they can replace eggs, which is also cheaper.

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Because having battery hens is extremely dangerous, in terms of the pandemics as we've seen, and so on. From an animal ethics point of view, they're horrendous, as they're concentration camps for hens. And it's clear that there's a lack of resources. In some countries, there has been a lack of resources.

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In South Korea, they ran out of eggs, because when there's a risk of a pandemic, they destroy a lot of hen farms. And so then they run out of resources. So we're working on finding plant-based solutions for recipes, and we're trying to share these with manufacturers. For example, we've just created a range with a large manufacturer called Délifrance.

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For two and a half years we've been working on a range called the "impact range." We've created ten or so products which are 100% plant-based, and we're distributing them all over Europe, with a focus on decarbonisation. Half of the market uses eggs as an ingredient. So if we address this market, that's an extremely significant market.

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And, for the time being, I think egg protein is a good alternative for people who still want to eat a little animal protein. I'm talking about people who don't have many resources, and egg protein isn't very expensive. So if people still want to continue to consume animal proteins, if we've already removed half of the eggs found in recipes, then that takes some pressure off.

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For French gastronomy, the ultimate challenge is to see whether it's possible to still have haute cuisine, whilst making it plant-based. So, could you have a three star restaurant, and people pay 300 to 400 euros, and where there's no fish or meat? I think that's a real challenge. That's what the American chef, Daniel Humm, who has a three star rating in New York, has done. He has embraced veganism for the same reasons, and has turned his restaurant completely vegan.

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He's been incredibly courageous. Twice voted best restaurant in the world. And in 2019 to 2020, he managed to do the same thing as what we've done in our bakeries. His restaurant is still open, and it's working well. So will there be chefs who'll be awarded with stars, for 100% plant-based gastronomy? That's a real subject for discussion.

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As for the rest, I think there's a lot to talk about later on. There will be lots of diverse and varied initiatives, more or less well executed. But people can be harsh on initiatives like these. People say that a lot of initiatives are failing, but that's normal, we're breaking new ground, it's all new territory.

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So people are taking risks. You have to look at what's going to happen in 10, 20, 30 years' time, rather than right now, as there's no legacy of plant-based gastronomy. It's pretty new. There are lots of them in other cultures. In Hindu culture, in Shinto culture, in Buddhist culture... In Japan all Buddhist monks are vegan, they don't eat animals.

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So it's not something all that new for homo-sapiens to eat in this way. It's highly related to culture. It's just about deconstructing things. And there are lots of initiatives that show that it's actually rather easy. We've already done burgers. We need there to be bistros that are born a bit veggie, things like that.

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And then the best advice I can give people to move in that direction, is not to put pressure on themselves, and to start, as if you were going to travel around the world, by taking that first step. Maybe that means just one vegetarian or vegan meal a week, or even once a month, just to demystify what that actually means.

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Because all the people I know who've gone vegetarian or vegan, I've never told them to do it. They did it all by themselves, and they always tell me: "but I thought it would be much more difficult than that!"

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