January – March 2024

Reduce on farm emissions and maximise carbon sequestration

FARMING connect
cyswllt FFERMIO

Our Farms Network

Our Farms update - Moor Farm - focusing on using genetic improvement to identify high somatic cell count cows within a herd using a single bulk tank sample.

Try Out Fund focusing on incorporating trees, agroforestry and woodland management:

- Silvoarable agroforestry
- Viability of growing walnut and sweet chestnut trees in west Wales

Agrisgôp

15 Agrisgôp meetings have taken place

No. of Meetings

- Energy efficiency and producing renewable energy 4
- Animal Health Improvement Cycle 6
- Incorporating trees *(including agroforestry)* 4
- Hedgerow management cycle 1

Groups that met during this period focussed on:

Group visit to one of the members farms to discuss their cow lameness management, successes and challenges. We collectively reviewed the foot trimming data for the farm and discussed reasons for the patterns seen in lesions. Farm walk to discuss challenge areas such as water pooling, grooving, cubicle comfort and foot bathing.

The group looked into, and discussed repowering contracts for their renewable energy production, Smart Export Guarantee (SEG) and Power Purchase Agreements. We need to source further clarification on SEG and how it works.

The group had a tour of part of the 35-acre site- approximately 80 elders are planted at Coed Dulas. It was useful for the group to see such a local example of a small-scale elder plantation. Bob, the host farmer, talked us through the challenges of establishing the trees and some of the ways he has found of overcoming those challenges as well as some of the mistakes he made.

Accredited Training

Courses on Offer	Individuals Supported	Hours of Training	Businesses Supported
23	83	1581	70

Courses completed included:
DIY AI - Sheep Scanning - Basic Tree Inspection

Feedback:

"I now have the knowledge to be able to identify potential hazardous trees, including leaning and rotten trees." (Tree inspection course)

"The Instructors on both days were excellent, they made me think about being more thorough and take greater attention to detail " (DIY AI Course)

Training courses are helping a shepherd prepare for a future in Welsh farming - read the full article on the Farming Connect website.

Mentoring

61 mentoring meetings have taken place

No. of Meetings

- Animal Health Improvement Cycle 5
- Incorporating trees *(including agroforestry)* 13
- Woodland management 19
- Hedgerow management cycle 24

Extracts from mentoring diaries include:

"We walked around some woodland planted by the mentee 30+ years ago and discussed various elements of ongoing maintenance and habitat improvement. We also looked at various ways of establishing field trees with ongoing grazing and identified areas where this would be appropriate."

"The mentee and I talked through different options to lower the number of calf caesareans, and the benefits of blood testing a sample of cows to look at trace element status."

"We talked through the mentees lambing plan and pasture management. We discussed the benefits of Faecal Egg Counting rather than blanket treatment for disease control and reduction in costs."

E-Learning

Modules on offer	Individuals Supported	Businesses Supported
59	125	76

Modules completed included:

E-Learning: *Mandatory Unit: Cattle Lameness*
E-Learning: *Mandatory Unit: Artificial Insemination*
E-Learning: *Abortion in Ewes*

New Modules Available on BOSS:

E-Learning: *Energy Efficiency on Cereal Farms*
E-Learning: *An Introduction to Sustainable Farming*
E-Learning: *Reducing Emissions and Improving Sequestration on Farm*
E-Learning: *Energy Efficiency and Fuel Savings on Beef and Sheep Farms*
E-Learning: *Sustainable Use of Anthelmintics*
E-Learning: *Antibiotic Resistance*

New Accredited E-learning suites:

Transition to SFS: *An Introduction to Sustainable Farming*

Horticulture

HORTICULTURE TRAINING - LAND

1 Horticulture events supported **12 individuals** from **8 different businesses.**

Events included: Introduction to Orchard Management

Feedback:
"Excellent and very informative session. Very interesting and enjoyable", "Great event. Well organised. Learnt loads. Thank you"

Business -

1 Horticulture event supported **1** individual from **1** business.

HORTICULTURE BUSINESS SUPPORT - LAND

3 Horticultural business support sessions supported **4 individuals** from **3 different businesses.**

These sessions focused on Horticultural sustainability practices including reducing water use, measuring energy indicators, increasing biodiversity and reducing chemical inputs.

Discussion Groups

Themes	Number of DG's	Number of Attendees	Hrs of CPD
Reduce on farm emissions and maximise carbon sequestration	40	305	95
Animal Health Improvement Cycle	37	288	89
Making use of genetic improvement	1	6	2
Energy efficiency and producing renewable energy	2	14	4
Incorporating trees, woodland management	1	9	2

Key Words: Animal Health, Rotational Grazing, Reduce risk, Data collection, Input costs, Overheads

Masterclasses

8 Masterclasses delivered focusing on key themes:

- Making use of genetic improvement
- Energy efficiency and producing renewable energy
- Incorporating trees

Farmers sign-up for carbon footprint support after Farming Connect masterclasses

Case study

Farming Connect services a conduit to multiple improvements on Welsh family farm.

Ear to the Ground

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EAR TO THE GROUND

Episode 92: An insight into the current situation in terms of the carbon footprint of beef and sheep farms in Wales

Episode 98: Ammonia - the issue and how to limit emissions from farming practices

Animal Health and Welfare Workshops

Workshops Delivered	Individuals Supported	Hours of Training	Businesses Supported
45	565	1695	340

27% of individuals supported were within the **25-40 age group**

Workshops delivered included:

Sheep Lameness - Optimising fertility: managing the dairy cow from drying off to submission - Lambing Losses Part 1: Abortion & Nutrition - Maximising Suckler Cow Productivity

Quote from Sheep Lameness workshop attendee:
"Be more mindful, checking store lambs for lameness when buying at market." - "Thank you for a very informative evening."

Surgeries

55 Surgeries were completed

Topics included -

- Woodland
- Regenerative agriculture and Biodiversity
- Carbon

Technical Article

Working Towards a More Sustainable Future: Breeding sheep for lower methane emissions

Advisory Service

The Advisory Service supported:

Themes	
Business Planning	13
Animal Health advice	222
Carbon Advice	1
Grassland Management	54
Livestock performance	1

Farmer feedback - *"The Advice and funding were very beneficial to our business, may thanks"*

"Very professional, excellent Vet who gives practical advice, which is workable and good for farming business"

Welsh Sheep Genetics Programme

A number of events were delivered focusing on the key theme of 'making use of genetic improvement', including a one-day study tour to High Country Romneys, Hill Farm, Llanigon to visit a Tier 2 WSGP flock.

The team at High Country Romneys manage Certified Animal Welfare Approved by A Greener World (AGW) sheep, running 600 recorded stud Romneys and RomTex ewes and 1,000 commercial Romneys all on a forage only system. The philosophy of the farm is to convert the maximum amount of grass into lamb at the lowest cost.

High Country Romneys has been at the forefront of importing top quality New Zealand Romney breeding stock and genetics to the UK for over 30 years, helping clients to build profitable and sustainable farm businesses through enhanced flock genetics that can increase profit per acre and reduce resource demand.

Feedback from the Study Tour to Hill Farm:*"Enjoyed the visit, very interesting chat and interesting farm"*
"A very interesting visit, thank you"

Ariennir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Funded by
Welsh Government