# RED MEAT DASHBOARD
## January – April 2019

**FARMING** connect
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**% of all activity in this quarter relevant to the red meat sector**
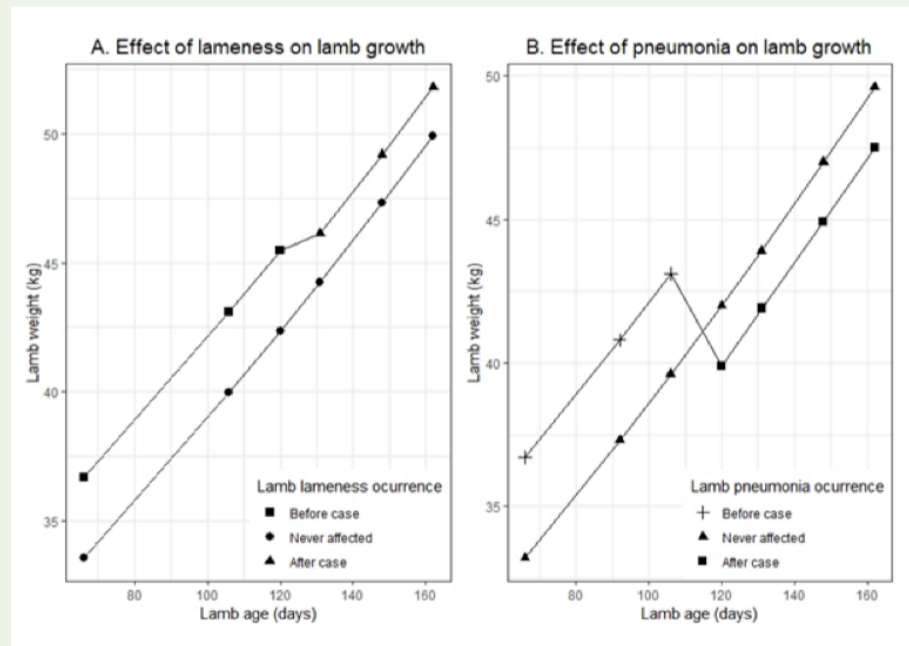
**73%** RED MEAT ACTIVITY
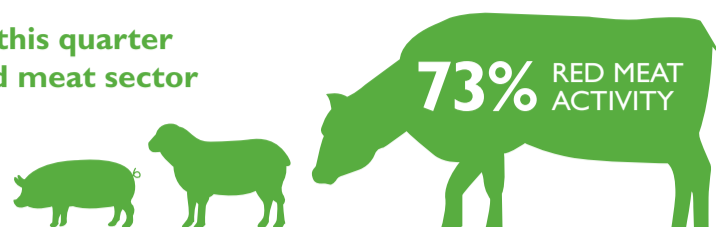
## Demonstration Network

### Monitoring health of ewes and lambs

A total of 4172 weight recordings from 805 lambs and data on disease events were collected over a six-month period in a commercial pedigree sheep flock at the Innovis Innovation Site.

- Ewe lameness and mastitis cases had a significant impact on lamb growth. Lambs from ewes identified with mastitis during lactation were on average 3.0 kg lighter at any time point than lambs from unaffected ewes.

- Lambs from ewes that were not lame during pregnancy were 3.0 kg heavier at 8 weeks of age than lambs from ewes with at least one lameness case during the same period. Lambs from ewes that were lame, either during the first four weeks or between 4-8 weeks of a lamb's life (but not lame during pregnancy), were also significantly heavier at 56 days of age than lambs reared by ewes that were lame during pregnancy (2.8 and 3.3 kg respectively).

- Cases of pneumonia and bacterial arthritis in lambs had a negative impact on lamb growth with unaffected lambs being 5.5 kg and 2.2 kg less than non-affected lambs respectively.

Overall, the project provides evidence that a combination of ewe and lamb characteristics and disease events play an important role in determining lamb growth rate.



A. Effect of lameness on lamb growth

Lamb lameness ocurrence
■ Before case
● Never affected
▲ After case

B. Effect of pneumonia on lamb growth

Lamb pneumonia ocurrence
+ Before case
▲ Never affected
■ After case

### Matching cow breed to the farm environment

Richard and Helen Roderick from Newton Farm Demonstration Site are switching from Limousin cross and Belgian Blue cross cows to Stabilisers in a bid to work with a breed that is more suited to a forage-based system.

Maintenance is one of the biggest costs of keeping cows and the aim is to breed smaller cows that are still as productive. The condition of these cows must be monitored to ensure they are able to perform at their best. Cows should have a condition score of 2-2.5 at calving and aim to have them on a rising plane of nutrition when they go out to grass so that they make use of the spring grass to increase their condition score. Mating with a condition score of 2.5-3 gives the best results.

### Investigating options for administering Vitamin B12 to growing lambs

This project will take place across three sites in 2019 including Clawdd y Mynach Focus Site, near Cowbridge, to look at different methods of administering vitamin B12 supplementation. Vitamin B12 is essential in growing animals especially for energy metabolism, production of red blood cells and is needed by the gut microbes to convert the stomach contents into the food elements that the animal is capable of digesting. Cobalt deficiency in soils can cause vitamin B12 deficiency in livestock. Clinical signs of cobalt deficiency are most commonly observed in weaned lambs at pasture during late summer/autumn; these signs include lethargy, reduced appetite, and poor-quality wool with an open fleece, small size and poor body condition despite adequate nutrition.

The three farms have known cobalt deficiencies and they will look at which type of supplementation suits their farm and system. Options to be used include bolus supplementation and injections. Growth rates and blood levels of vitamin B12 will be monitored to see if there are any differences in the different forms of supplementation.

### Improving production efficiencies
### Homegrown maize helping achieve earlier slaughter target weights

Arwyn Jones, Plas Farm Demonstration Site, is reducing his reliance on purchased feedstuffs by growing maize. By incorporating maize into the rations, animals are transitioning quicker to the winter ration with no check in growth rates.

By finishing the animals earlier due to faster growth rates, the cost savings are £20-£30/head.

Analysis of the maize was 33.9% DM, 11.6 ME and 37% starch.

## KE Hub

Technical articles produced by the KE HUB;

- THE USE OF THERMAL IMAGING TECHNOLOGY TO ENHANCE LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION
- ON THE FARMER'S RADAR: TOP 10 TECH TRENDS FOR AGRICULTURE
- METABOLIC PROFILING OF EWES TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTION
- A SMALL BUT DEADLY GREENHOUSE GAS: HOW TO REDUCE METHANE EMISSIONS FROM LIVESTOCK

Factsheets produced:

- SLURRY SEPARATION
- MULTI-CUT SILAGE

## Venture

**14** NEW RED MEAT PROVIDERS

**12** NEW RED MEAT SEEKERS

**10 RED MEAT MATCHES** currently being supported via the Advisory Service

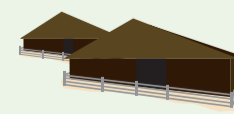3 new red meat Joint Ventures established via Venture during this period

Current opportunities available:

Number of opportunities offered:

**14 RED MEAT UNITS**

Total land area offered:

**1000 HECTARES** (RED MEAT UNITS ONLY)

## Discussion Groups

**79** held with **680**
RED MEAT DISCUSSION GROUP MEETINGS · ATTENDEES

**Number of Red Meat Discussion Groups: 50**

### Case Study

Aled Davies from Pruex visited a sheep Discussion Group on Anglesey in April to discuss 'Post-lambing' and what steps could be taken to reduce the use of microbial antibiotics during this traditionally 'heavy-use' period. He pointed out to members that whilst human overuse of antibiotics is the main contributor to the development of immunity, agriculture shouldn't be overlooked, and the industry needs to be seen leading the way in reducing usage.

Aled recommended taking swabs of inside the lambing shed, including the water tanks, to ascertain which bacteria were actually present. Steps can then be taken to counteract the multiplication of these particular bacteria:

- Keep water tanks and feed troughs high to avoid livestock faecal contamination. This will also reduce the transferral of E-coli between the ewe's mouth and the newborn lamb when it is licked by its mother
- Keep the bedding dry, as bacteria multiplies in a damp environment
- Keep water troughs clean to reduce the biofilm on the water, therefore, keeping the ewe's mouth clean
- Don't overstock

Following these steps can vastly reduce the two main diseases that cause both losses and poor thriving lambs at lambing time – Watery Mouth and Joint ill.

## Strategic Awareness Events
**59** Events Held with **2434** attendees

| | |
|---|---|
| **6** FARMING FOR THE FUTURE (FBG) | **10** PDP WORKSHOPS |
| **1** HEALTH AND SAFETY ROADSHOW | **19** MAKING TAX DIGITAL |
| **3** STAKEHOLDER BREAKFASTS | **6** SUCCESSION WORKSHOPS – START THE CONVERSATION |
| **9** SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION GRANT 2 | **3** TENANT FARMERS FORUMS |
| **2** WORM CONTROL ROADSHOWS | |

*Strategic Awareness Event themes are often cross-sectoral that tend to attract farmers from all sectors, including the Red Meat sector.

## Surgeries
**39** Surgeries Held

| | |
|---|---|
| **4** DIGITAL BUSINESS REVIEWS | **9** SUCCESSION SURGERIES |
| **6** PLANNING SURGERIES | **5** IT SURGERIES |
| **2** FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SURGERIES | **1** DIGITAL SUCCESSION SURGERY |
| **9** MARKETING AND DIVERSIFICATION SURGERIES | **1** DIGITAL PLANNING SURGERY |
| **2** DIGITAL MARKETING AND DIVERSIFICATION SURGERIES | |

The one-to-one surgeries that we provide are open to all sectors, including the Red Meat sector, meaning that expert advice can be spread further afield. During this period, a total of **213 red meat** businesses attended a surgery, either face-to-face or over the phone.

## Mentoring Programme

**78** NEW RED MEAT FARMERS ACCESSING THE MENTORING PROGRAMME

**280** RED MEAT FARMERS CURRENTLY BEING MENTORED

**85%** OF ALL MENTEES ARE RED MEAT FARMERS

**7** OF THE ABOVE ARE PIG FARMERS

### New mentees sought advice on various topics including:

- Goat meat production
- Rotational grazing
- EID equipment
- Improving ewe health
- On-farm health & safety
- Suckler herd breeding

## Training

During this period, **199** instances of face-to-face training were delivered to individuals within the Red Meat sector.

| BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT | TECHNICAL TRAINING | MACHINERY & EQUIPMENT USE |
|---|---|---|
| **89** INDIVIDUALS TRAINED | **77** INDIVIDUALS TRAINED | **33** INDIVIDUALS TRAINED |

## E-learning

Some of the e-learning courses completed within this period:

- FARM FINANCE
- CATTLE LAMENESS
- PIGLET SURVIVAL – SOW NUTRITION
- JOHNE'S DISEASE IN SHEEP

Click here to visit the website

## Some key highlights on our Website and Social Media platforms recently...

Facebook 18/04/2019

### Managing the Growing Lamb

Join us and experts in the field, including the sheep consultant, John Vipond, at our event to discuss and receive practical advice on managing the growing lamb.

We have different events in different areas of Wales!

**People Reached: 3,099**
**Engagements: 141**
**Likes, comments & shares: 11**

**www.gov.wales/farmingconnect**