

% of activity relevant to the Organic sector:

23% ORGANIC ACTIVITY

591 BUSINESSES REGISTERED with Farming Connect are from the Organic sector.

Demonstration Network

Fferm Henbant: Organic market garden

Henbant is a small (30ha), ecologically and holistically managed farm in North West Wales, two miles from the coast and is at 100m above sea level. The organic farm is approximately half woodland with the pasture being equally split between rough grazing and semi-improved, in-bye, land. It is owned and managed by new entrants to farming and the regenerative farming ideas were implemented following a Farming Connect Management Exchange visit. The farm aims to produce profit financially, ecologically and socially whilst being enjoyable to manage. The farm has to provide the family's income and pay a mortgage whilst relying on significant support from volunteers and interns. Current pasture is managed holistically but within larger field parcels than the daily livestock requirements. The farm has grown vegetables on a very small scale for many years and has a range of other diversified business interests including tourism.

Current plan of the market garden



The market garden was laid out to have regular, permanent, 70cm wide beds, 10m in length with 40cm wood chip paths. They are all orientated north to south and every 11th bed is a wider bed with fruit trees and perennial plants, these are all designed to have some extra function, be it attracting insects, mineral cycling or edible/productive. The area was covered with silage plastic and had previously been pig paddocks. A significant amount of bought in municipal compost was mixed with own farmyard manure. This was put onto beds at a 10cm depth.

Crop planning was essential to make a financial success of the market garden. A range of crop plans from other market gardens were collected and one was synthesised for Henbant's scale, experience and way of working. A plan was made to grow sufficient vegetables for forty box shares from June to December.

Market garden area image showing beds established and planted



EIP Wales

Growing asparagus organically

Asparagus has good potential in Wales as it's a high value crop which is a good draw for farm gate sales. This 3 year project is looking at the agronomy and economics of growing the crop on two farms in Monmouthshire. May 2020 saw the first harvest of the spears and the group put together a harvesting guide that was published for the benefit of other growers in Wales. As well as discussing some of the common problems experienced around harvest time the guide also highlighted how to make the most from the crop.

Good organisation is essential to ensure successful harvesting, packing and marketing of the crop.

- Ensure you have market outlets for your asparagus
- Ensure there are sufficient trained staff available for harvesting and packing
- Clean and prepare the packing area and cold store
- Plan the harvesting process and pick evenly across the field
- Tractor mounted rigs reduce the amount of load staff have to carry and streamline processes



When selling through farms shops, there is a little more tolerance to defects and variations in size but quality must always be the main goal.



Presentation in the shop is important and often customers prefer smaller bunches.

KE Hub

The following technical articles have been produced by the KE Hub:

- THE USE OF HERBAL ESSENTIAL OILS IN PIG NUTRITION – IS IT ALL HOGWASH?
- CARBON CAPTURE TECHNOLOGY – 12 METHODS THAT CAN BE INCORPORATED ON YOUR FARM
- OPTIMISING THE DAIRY COW DIET FOR IMPROVED HEALTH
- PUBLIC GOODS AND FARMING
- DROUGHT RESISTANT CROPS FOR THE FUTURE
- ORGANIC ARABLE FARMING AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

Surgeries

118 Surgeries Held

Key topics included:

Marketing & Diversification

Planning

Grassland

Animal health



29

DISCUSSION GROUP MEETINGS RELATED TO THE ORGANIC SECTOR



225

ATTENDEES

Case Study

Following a Farming Connect webinar with Dave Davies, Silage Solutions on “Top tips for Quality Silage”, a member of the [Organic Dairy Group](#) had specific questions regarding an organic growing system. In June 2020, a further virtual meeting with Dr Dave Davies and the discussion group was arranged by the local development officer.

Dr Dave Davies focused the main discussion around how best to produce silage from grass and legumes in an organic system, particularly in a testing dry spell as experienced in early summer 2020.


Different grass species and legumes were discussed and how the members could measure their own silage quality at home. Dr Dave Davies shared easy at-home methods to measure dry matter (DM) and supplied equations they could use to calculate the metabolisable energy (ME) from it.

Key indicators and targets that the farmers should be striving for were explored. Using the silage quality calculating methods shown, the farmers could then benchmark their silage – comparing their figures to the ideal targets.


An enthusiastic question and answer session followed allowing the members the opportunity to expand on details of their own farming system and get specific advice relating to their farm.

Mentoring


WE HAVE **10** ORGANIC MENTORS ON THE FRAMEWORK




Click here for [Alan's profile](#)




Click here for [Dafydd's profile](#)




Click here for [David's profile](#)




Click here for [Haydn's profile](#)




Click here for [Helen's profile](#)




Click here for [Jim's profile](#)



Click here for [Phillip's profile](#)



Click here for [Richard's profile](#)



Click here for [Romeo's profile](#)

Topics discussed:




Organic beekeeping



Converting to organic sheep production




Organic dairy production



34

WEBINARS HELD



4,344

VIEWERS

Examples of webinars held include:

Weed control in grassland

Managing grass supply

Maintaining soil health

Multi species leys

Growing options to generate extra income on farm

Agrisgôp

54

MEETINGS HAVE BEEN RELATED TO THE ORGANIC SECTOR

Some examples of group themes:

Horticultural meeting

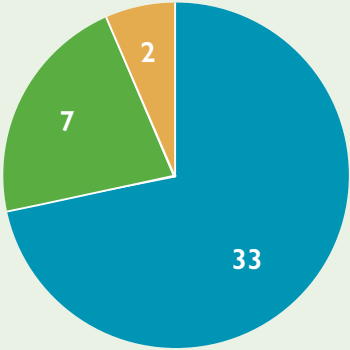
Back to the soil

Organic and beyond

Training

There have been 4 application windows between October 2019 and September 2020 with **878** instances of training delivered during this period. Of this number, **32** instances could potentially fall into the Organic sector:


Individuals trained potential interest in Organic Sector





Business

Livestock

Land

MANAGING CASUAL AND SEASONAL TEAMS

LEVEL 2 AWARD IN THE SAFE USE OF PESTICIDES (PA1) & SAFE APPLICATION OF PESTICIDES USING HAND HELD EQUIPMENT (PA6)

MASTERING MEDICINE COURSE

E-learning

Some of the e-learning courses completed within this period relating to the Organic sector:

Farmyard composting

Agroceuticals – daffodils and alzheimer's

Organic horticulture

For more information on e-learning, please visit the [website](#).

Advisory Service

The advisory service offers tailored support to help individuals identify their goals. The Organic Production category provides advice on all organic standards and organic farming scheme agreements. Advice within this category will also ensure individuals gain an understanding of the land, cropping and livestock management required. Those new to the sector can receive advice on developing an organic conversion strategy. Both established and new businesses can receive advice on financial implications as well as practical advice on developing a marketing strategy.

Click [here](#) to learn more.



Cronfa Amaethyddol Ewrop ar yfer Dathbysu Gwledig

European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development

Europe Investing in Rural Areas



Llywodraeth Cymru

Welsh Government