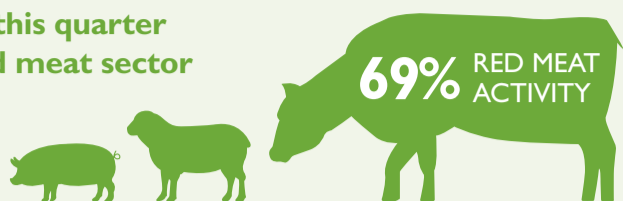


RED MEAT DASHBOARD

May 2021 – August 2021

% of all activity in this quarter relevant to the red meat sector



Webinars



13

RED MEAT THEMED WEBINARS

held with



354 VIEWERS

Examples of webinars held include:

[Bryn Farm Update](#)

[Reducing your farm's carbon footprint – how are others achieving it?](#)

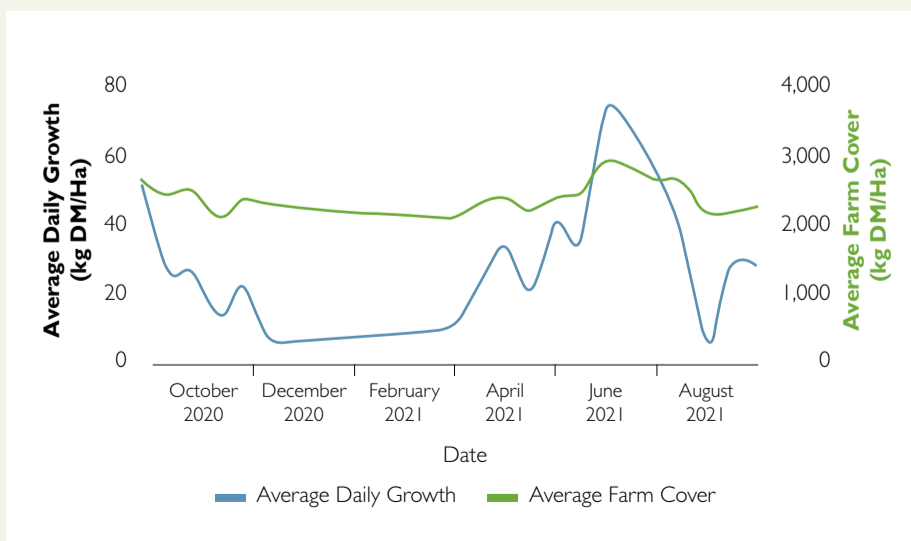
[The use of bolus technology to improve conception rates, calving period and herd health at Moelogan Fawr](#)

Demonstration Network

Bryn Farm: Improving suckler herd efficiency and identifying new opportunities

Huw Jones, Bryn Farm historically sold all beef calves off the farm as stores, but with TB becoming more of a mental burden on Huw, he wanted to investigate the farm's ability of finishing cattle off grass. Huw is a member of a Farming Connect beef discussion group and a Farming Connect Prosper from Pasture group, which focuses on grazing management.

Taking on this change has meant Huw having to focus strongly on measuring grass and installing a grazing infrastructure to ensure correct allocation and best utilisation. It was identified that cattle needed to be sold by October by the latest to ensure the grazing platform had enough time to recover for spring grazing. With this in mind, a target of 1kg daily liveweight gain (DLWG) has been set and Huw has been weighing cattle regularly to ensure cattle growth is on track. In May, cattle growth was under target. The weather was a major factor with May being dominated by low pressure, bringing prolonged spells of rain. Grass growth remained slow at 36kgDM/ha in May and as a result of slow grass growth and harsh weather conditions on the cattle, DLWG dropped to 0.71kg. As weather improved in June, grass growth jumped to 75kgDM/ha and, thankfully, cattle have returned to their growth target of 1kg/day in June and July. Huw is facing another challenge in August with grass growth plummeting to 7kgDM/ha after experiencing a heatwave and low rainfall. Huw was forced to feed out hay to buffer supply and demand. Cattle will be weighed again to identify the knock on effect of this challenging period.



Graph 1. Average daily growth at Bryn Farm and average farm cover.

Cefngwilgy Fawr: Improving herd health through the use of technology

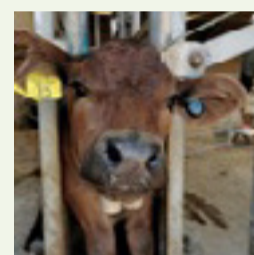
Calf health is one area in which Edward and Kate Jones, Cefngwilgy Fawr are keen to address following some cases of pneumonia in the calves in past years.

The suckler herd at Cefngwilgy Fawr consist of 50 Limousin-cross and British Blue-cross cows and mostly spring calving, which calve indoors and then turned out to pasture.

Project Objectives:

- To improve calf health and performance
- To identify disease early-on and apply interventions where necessary
- To reduce the use of antibiotics

This project focuses on improving the monitoring of calf health and ensuring early interventions to reduce disease incidence and antibiotic use on-farm. An ear tag which measures calf activity and temperature has been placed on the spring-born calves to monitor their health. Initial trials on the system have shown that it can detect disease approximately two days prior to the appearance of clinical signs. This enables targeted antibiotic usage and has the potential to improve growth rates and calf mortality



as disease is detected early. The housing environment will also be monitored through the use of on-farm sensors and LoRaWAN technology.

Figure 1. Ear tag which measures calf activity and temperature has been placed on the spring-born calves to monitor their health.

Discussion Groups



93

RED MEAT DISCUSSION GROUP MEETINGS

held with



904

ATTENDEES

Case Study

North Montgomeryshire sheep group

The meeting focused on weaning management with the aim of ensuring that lambs are healthy and happy once weaned so as not to enter a post-weaning check.

During the meeting, the speaker, Kate Phillips (Flockhealth) encouraged group members to share their experiences from previous years and identify stresses faced by lambs and how to mitigate any weaning checks. Being an on-farm, interactive meeting, this led to plenty of discussions and questions. The group have become familiar with each other and therefore are forthcoming with sharing experiences, things that may not have gone well in the past and how they learnt from those things.

It is important to wean lambs on to high quality, worm clear pastures. Members were encouraged to do regular Faecal Egg Counts (FEC) to ensure worm burdens weren't too high and to help identify the need to drench.

Weaning is also a good opportunity to look at the ewes and to start thinking about the next breeding season. Kate reminded the group about Iceberg diseases and body condition scoring and identifying the 'thin to cull' ewes.

E-learning

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

PESTICIDE SAFETY



PLANNING AND FINANCE



EYE DISEASES IN SHEEP



CLIMATE CHANGE AND LAND MANAGEMENT

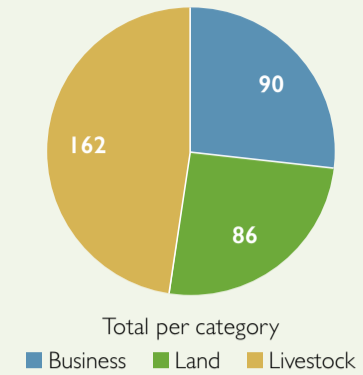


Click [here](#) to visit the website.

Training

During this period, **338** instances of face to face training were delivered to the Red Meat sector:

Individuals trained by category



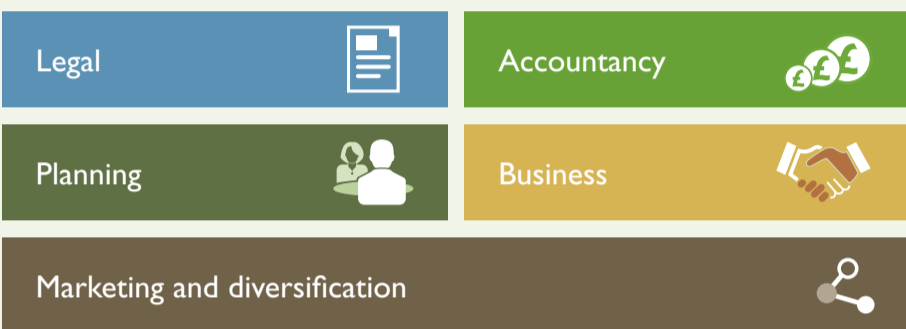
The most popular courses in each category were:



Surgeries



Key topics included:



Businesses from the red meat sector attended all of these surgeries.

Mentoring Programme



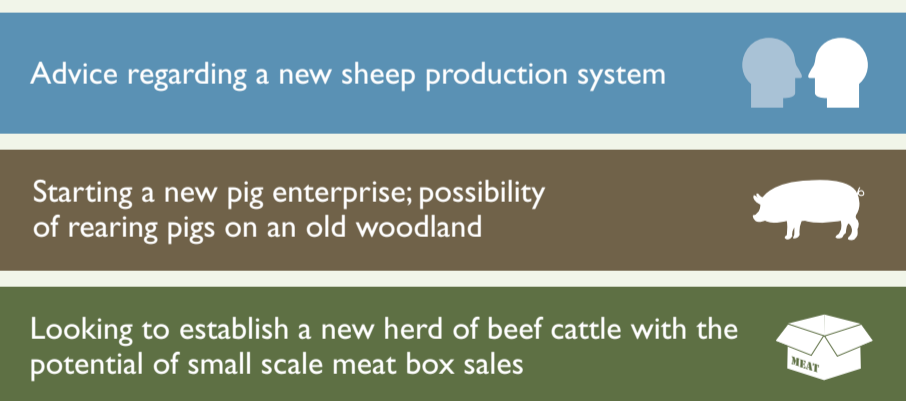
36 NEW RED MEAT FARMERS ACCESSING THE MENTORING PROGRAMME



584 RED MEAT FARMERS CURRENTLY BEING MENTORED

15 OF THESE ARE PIG FARMERS

New mentees sought advice on various topics including:



Click [here](#) to access the full Mentor Directory.

Animal Health & Welfare Workshops



16 RED MEAT WORKSHOPS

held with



207 ATTENDEES



EIP Wales



Fluke mapping using eDNA to inform development of sustainable control measures

With funding from the European Innovation Partnership (EIP) Wales, six Ceredigion farmers who produce lamb and beef are working with IBERS, Aberystwyth University, and the Ystwyth Veterinary Practice in Aberystwyth on a project to investigate whether fluke mapping using environmental DNA (eDNA) can help control fluke on their farms.

Earlier in 2021, water from habitats on the six farms was collected and filtered through eDNA capturing filters, which were then screened for the presence of mud snail DNA. The results of this test are now being used to create a detailed map showing fluke infection risk areas on each of the project farms, to inform their decision making around the management of fluke infection risk areas and the sheep that graze them. Interventions to reduce contact between livestock and fluke on pasture such as fencing and drainage can be costly so specifying and prioritising habitats which pose the highest risk should help inform decision making around this, says Emma Jones, of ADAS, the project's innovation broker.

Dr Rhys Jones, of IBERS, has been leading the water sampling and analysis aspect of the project. He hopes the project will assist farmers to make informed livestock management decisions, in consultation with their vets, that help with fluke control and reduce reliance on triclabendazole liver fluke control. Triclabendazole resistance is a major threat to the sustainability of sheep production in many areas of the UK, says Dr Jones.

"We hope to demonstrate that by identifying fluke infection areas, farmers can be proactive and take measures to reduce fluke infections in their flocks rather than being reactive and treating animals in a blanket treatment approach," he says.

In the early stages of the project, multiple areas were identified on each farm where mud snails are present. These areas included small habitats resulting from broken drains, spring heads and open ditches. Dr Jones says discussions took place with the farmers on how these areas could be managed in future to limit fluke risk. However, there are many larger habitats identified in the project where draining and fencing are not feasible. But by testing animals regularly, and treating when necessary with appropriate products, Dr Jones says the project farmers have been able to limit the amount of fluke eggs shed onto these mud snail habitats earlier this year.

"This should lead to reduced fluke infection risk this autumn," he says.

The project will continue into 2022 with further testing of water and animals planned, to guide fluke control practices on each farm.

