




“It’s been a busy few months for our technical officers in south west Wales. They have been working closely with our new demonstration farms to plan exciting new projects to inspire you. Keep a close eye out for project updates on our website and social media channels”.

- Dewi Hughes, Technical Manager



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Improving beef enterprises performance

This will be the key focus for the next three years at Bryn Farm, a brand-new Farming Connect demonstration site in Cardigan. The first part of the project explores various finishing systems to determine which one suits Bryn Farm best.

Fifteen bulls were selected, with the majority being Charolais cross and the remainder Hereford cross from predominantly Saler cows. These are fed ad-lib concentrates and straw with a 50/50 mix of brought-in and home-grown feed. The remaining bulls were castrated and mixed with the heifers. These are given a growing or store cattle diet, which is mainly made up of silage with 2.5kg of concentrates with a mix of home-grown and bought-in feed.

Key areas which will be focused on during the project include:

- Improving suckler herd performance
- Minimise TB risk by selling finished cattle
- Make the best use of home-grown feed and grass.

Selecting for efficient genetics in a spring calving herd

A project focusing on genomic testing has recently started at Mountjoy demonstration site in Pembrokeshire. Genomic testing is a useful tool to accurately predict the genetic merit of young animals. Results gained can ensure that the correct replacements are bred from to maximise herd performance and profitability. As a part of the project, 95 R2 heifers due to calve in March 2020 were genomically tested in December 2019. An event will be held here on the 14 July 2020.



Genomic applicator and specimen tubes

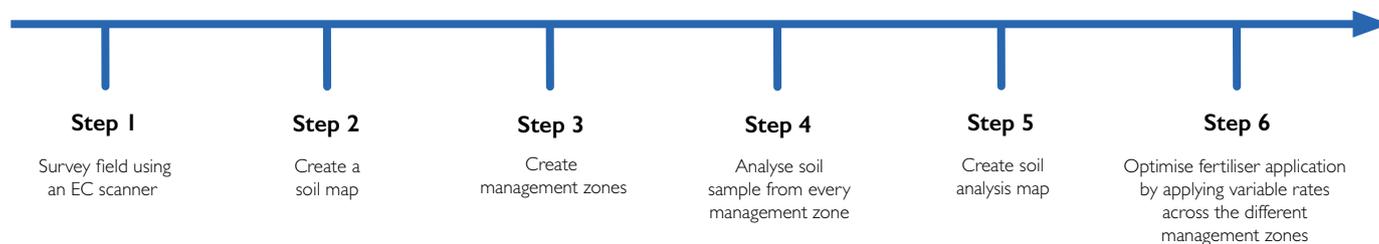
PRECISION LAND MANAGEMENT AT PANTYDERI

Historically, soil sampling involved taking one representative sample in a ‘W’ pattern across a field, or more recently, grid sampling fields according to GPS points. It is now possible, using Electrical Conductivity (EC) scanning techniques, to map precisely how different soil properties vary across a field, and then to divide the field into management zones on the basis of varying soil types.

This will be the focus of a new project at Pantyderi demonstration site in Pembrokeshire.

Strategic soil sampling of these management zones will then yield a picture of variable nutrient data, which can be used to inform variable rate fertiliser applications. This helps to even-up crop yields across the field, ensures efficient nutrient use, and is more environmentally friendly.

Soil mapping process at Pantyderi



Farming Connect - Update

Following the recent developments with regards to the Coronavirus, all Farming Connect open events and one-to-many events have been postponed until at least the end of May. Please see our website and social media channels for our latest news and updates.



Keep up to date with the latest project developments and results by visiting our website and by following us on social media.

www.gov.wales/farmingconnect

