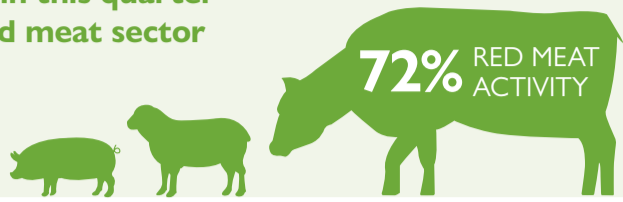


# RED MEAT DASHBOARD

January 2022 – April 2022

72% of all activity in this quarter relevant to the red meat sector



## Knowledge Exchange Hub

Technical articles produced by the KE HUB:

-  THE IMPACT OF HERBAL LEYS ON THE HEALTH AND PERFORMANCE OF GRAZING LAMBS
-  IMPROVING SUCKLER HERD HEALTH WITH MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AROUND CALVING
-  SHEEP SCAB: UPDATE AND FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

## Webinars



Examples of webinars held include:

Feeding the ewe in preparation for lambing



Calf Rearing and Weanling Contracts Pros & Cons



## Demonstration Network

### Bodwi Demonstration Farm – Cost-effective methods of rejuvenating old pasture

Bodwi Demonstration Site is a lowland beef and sheep holding. The area farmed includes 113 hectares of rented land. The rented land is primarily used for grazing, with a large proportion managed as a rotational grazing system for the herd.

The land receives regular lime and fertiliser applications, but has not been cultivated for a number of decades. Pasture productivity is good. However, there has been an increased presence of weed species – specifically moss – appearing within the sward in recent years.

The presence of moss is generally linked with wet conditions, high phosphorus availability and/or poor nutrition, whereby the grass cannot compete with weed species. However, these issues are not particularly evident on this land.

Grassland renewal via no-tillage (no-till) or minimum tillage (min-till) establishment methods is increasing in popularity, as reducing soil tillage becomes a priority for many farmers looking to improve their soil management and organic matter content. The disturbance caused by tillage can negatively affect soil structure, health and function. Rejuvenating older pastures by oversowing can be an effective approach for improving pasture productivity and quality without the financial and environmental burden of ploughing.

There are several rejuvenation approaches that can be implemented on the farm. The aim of this project is to explore the potential for the renewal of old, less productive pasture via min-till methods of establishment (e.g. aerating, harrowing prior to direct drilling), and in doing so, to assess the impact of different rejuvenation methods on the establishment success of new grass varieties. Furthermore, to evaluate the impact of rejuvenation methods and introducing new grass varieties on soil structure and health, and grass quality and quantity.

## Discussion Groups



### Case Study

A beef finishers Discussion Group from Anglesey had expressed an interest in learning more about growing their own protein on farm, to reduce input costs. Their development officer arranged a meeting with Wyn and Eurig Jones from Farming Connect Demonstration site Pant y Deri, alongside Dr Delana Davies, the Farming Connect technical officer who has been working alongside them on an arable project.

The project saw the farm establish a mixed crop of peas and beans that could be harvested and stored in a clamp for winter feeding.

The project outcome was a reduction of £33/tonne in concentrate costs, ultimately saving the business a total of £5588 for the beef finishing enterprise as a whole.

The main benefits of growing peas and beans as a mixed crop are:

- Peas establish early and provide a ground cover that stifles weed growth
- Beans provide a natural 'scaffold' that helps support the crop later in the growing period
- Both crops benefit from the same agronomy
- Growing both crops together ensures that maturing stages are synched
- The peas fill the air pockets between the beans in the clamp when crimped, thus facilitating better anaerobic conditions
- Tests show that mixed crops tend to provide a better yield than a singular grown crop

The crop produced a yield of 5.25t/ha of peas and beans and 22 big bales of straw/ha. It cost £432/ha to grow the crop, £100/ha to harvest and £24/ha to crimp. This was equivalent to purchasing concentrate at 86%DM for £117/tonne. In terms of monetary savings per head/per day, it cost 1p less for store cattle and 21p less for finishing cattle.

Group members had their initial doubts allayed by Wyn and Eurig, who reassured them that the growing and harvesting process had been relatively straightforward. The benefit that appealed most was the significant saving in nitrogen (N) for the follow-on wheat crop: it was estimated that the establishment of a pea and bean crop contributed 100kg/ha of residual N in the soil.

A good informative discussion was had between members and the guest speakers, with some members keen to venture into growing their own protein on farm.

## Surgeries



Key topics included:

1 Accountancy	4 Planning	1 Business
7 Marketing and diversification	3 Carbon footprinting	5 Legal
1 Information technology	1 Staff management	

A sheep and beef farm attended a business and business performance surgery to review their business plan to apply for a tenancy. This gave them guidance on costs and how to evaluate their business performance.



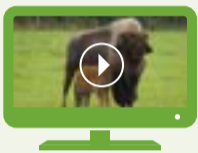
**Developing a blueprint for controlling malignant catarrhal fever (MCF) in bison, buffalo, and cattle in Wales**

In the UK and Wales, some pioneering producers have found a ready market for bison meat. It is considered to be a healthy red meat alternative to traditional beef products, being lower in fat, cholesterol and sodium. It also has a very similar protein content, is lower in calories, and is high in iron and vitamin B12.

Compared to beef in the UK, bison meat is worth considerably more, with deadweight prices for bison approximately twice that for cattle, and retail prices for bison meat frequently more than 1.5 times that of beef.

As such, bison are considered as an option for farmers looking to diversify. However, bison are challenging – not only due to their temperament and sensitivity to stress, but also their increased susceptibility to malignant catarrhal fever (MCF), which is considered the disease-limiting factor to successful production.

MCF can affect cattle, bison, water buffalo, deer, and yak, and sheep are considered the main reservoir host. However, bison, buffalo and deer are considered to be much more susceptible than cattle, and this is one of the main hurdles for farmers wanting to diversify into these lucrative niche markets.



Click [here](#) to take a look at the video to learn how this EIP Wales project is investigating how the disease can be controlled on farms in Wales.

**Strategic Awareness Events**

**9 Events Held with 277 attendees**



Key topics included.

**What is our farm's carbon footprint? Red meat sector**

Diane Spence and John Richards joined Farming Connect for a webinar discussing how farm businesses in the red meat sector can calculate their carbon footprint. During the webinar, the following topics were covered:

- Principles and the key issues that influence the carbon footprint
- What data is required to measure accurately
- Introduction to three carbon calculator tools that are available and free to use

This was an interactive webinar, where the audience had an opportunity to ask and discuss questions.

**Pre-lambing ewe health**

Fiona Lovatt joined Farming Connect to provide some advice and guidance on how to keep ewes in tip-top health before lambing. Below are some of the points that were covered in this webinar.

- Fiona presented the results from last year's Farming Connect colostrum study, where data was collected from 1,295 ewes from 64 Welsh flocks.
- Last year, nearly 6 million doses of Spectam were given to UK lambs, and it is not available this year. Fiona shared options and guidance on alternatives.

There was also an opportunity to ask questions at this webinar.

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

**Management Exchange**

**Rebecca Williams**



Young farmer Rebecca Williams is a business partner at her family's 400 acre upland farm, where she has worked for the last five years. She has an appetite for learning, and plans to utilise her exchange visit to learn all she can about marketing and adding value to red meat.

*"Efficiency and profitability are two key drivers for me, so I want to learn from farmers who successfully process and market their produce directly to consumers."*

**Mentoring programme**

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

**87** RED MEAT FARMERS CURRENTLY BEING MENTORED

**76%** OF ALL CURRENTLY ACTIVE MENTEES ARE RED MEAT FARMERS



New mentees sought advice on various topics, including:



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

**Animal Health & Welfare Workshops (relevant to red meat)**

**31** WORKSHOPS

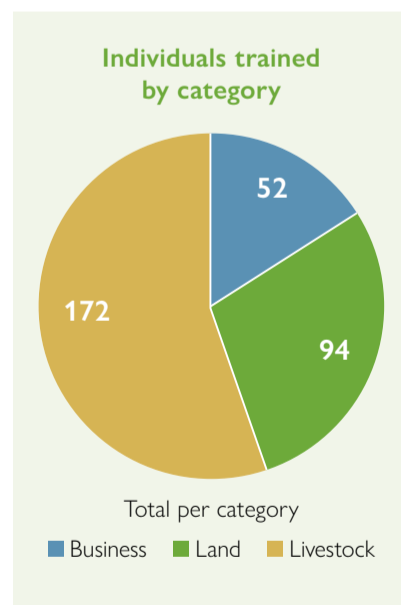
held with

**401** ATTENDEES

- Lambing Losses Part 1: Abortion and Nutrition
- Lambing Losses Part 2: from birth to weaning
- Sheep Lameness
- Sheep Parasite Control Part 1: Roundworms and blowfly
- Understanding Johne's disease
- Youngstock Health

**Training**

During this period, **318** instances of face-to-face training were delivered to the red meat sector.



Most popular courses by category in the red meat sector: Number of individuals trained:

Book-keeping	12
Level 2 Award in the Safe Use of Pesticides (PA1) & Safe Application of Pesticides Using Vehicle Mounted Boom Sprayer Equipment (PA2)	26
DIY AI	33

**E-learning**

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

- ABORTION IN EWES
- LAMBING THE BASICS
- AGROCEUTICALS – DAFFODILS AND ALZHEIMER'S
- CALF HOUSING

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

