

THE MAGAZINE FOR FARMING & FORESTRY IN WALES

# FARMING connect



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## Using every blade

How a Pembrokeshire farm has maximised its grass production

## Tree health

How to prevent the spread of pests and diseases



**Demonstration Site:** Bryn Farm, Cardigan, Ceredigion

**Technical Officer:** Menna Williams

**Project Title:** Mixed farm business model - Maximise performance from suckler cows

Making a margin from suckler cows is never easy, but there are several areas that can usually be improved on. Working out the physical and financial performance of your herd is a good starting point, to improve performance from suckler herds.

Huw and Meinir Jones at Farming Connect Demonstration Site Bryn Farm, near Cardigan, have focused on improving their suckler herd efficiency, through working out the KPIs below and drawing up action plans to rectify problems.

**Calving percentage** - The aim of the suckler herd is for each breeding animal to produce a healthy calf every year (with a calving interval of 365 days). It is important to make sure cows are managed according to the appropriate body condition score for the stage of production, to optimise use of resources and fertility. Appropriate bulls should be chosen so that calving difficulties and hence calf (and cow) mortality is reduced. At Bryn, a combination of measures has seen the calf-reared percentage rise from 88% to 94%.

**Reducing calving spread** - This is a good indicator of overall fertility in a herd. Ideally, cows should only be bulled for a nine-week period, and heifers for six weeks. Huw made the decision to calve three weeks later in 2022 to better suit grass growth on the farm, and has seen its calving period reduce from 12 weeks in 2019 to under nine weeks in 2022.

**Cow efficiency** - This measure is a function of cow size and calf weight, so reducing cow size can improve efficiency, especially if the cows are still milky, fertile and rear good-sized calves. Reducing your cow size by 50kg can allow for roughly seven more cows to be kept per 100 for the same maintenance energy requirement. It is the output from the extra calves that can be produced that makes this a worthwhile objective and far outweighs any additional cull value from larger cows. At Bryn, the cow size was already reasonably compact, at 575kg, so the focus has been on raising the cow efficiency to over 50% by improving calf weight gains and weaning weights.

**Reducing costs** - Another issue that affects many suckler herds is the cost of wintering the cows, especially where the winter is long due to wet weather. Farms that can outwinter cattle are at an advantage. At Bryn, the relatively light ground has allowed the growing of forage brassica crops to keep cows out and only house for calving. Rotationally grazing all cattle age classes has been fundamental in reducing costs.

Farming Connect's Measure to Manage tool is an excellent way to commence the benchmarking process, this tool is free to any registered business.

For further information, along with the full project report, please visit the Farming Connect website: [gov.wales/farmingconnectourfarms](https://gov.wales/farmingconnectourfarms)



## Tree health

Dafydd Owen - Forestry Technical Officer

There has been a substantial increase in the number of tree pests and diseases over the last 10 years, with the arrival of those pests and diseases into the United Kingdom having serious economic, social and environmental implications.

*Phytophthora ramorum*, which affects larch trees, and *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* on ash trees, has already had a devastating effect on our landscape. In December 2021, the first case of the pathogen *Phytophthora pluvialis* was identified in Gwynedd. *P. pluvialis* is a fungal pathogen that affects many pine tree species, including Douglas-fir and western hemlock. It can cause needle cast, shoot dieback, and lesions on the stem, branches and roots.

It has now been found at 15 sites across Wales, including Carmarthenshire, Powys, Newport, Monmouthshire and Rhondda Cynon Taff. Because the disease has never been detected in Europe before, research continues to understand whether potentially vulnerable species could be affected.

On the Welsh Government website [gov.wales/tree-health](https://gov.wales/tree-health), there are maps showing demarcated areas around sites with confirmed cases. Movement restrictions have been introduced for material capable of spreading *P. pluvialis* and *P. ramorum* using Notices. A Notice provides a description of the boundary. It can prohibit the movement of any relevant susceptible material unless authorised in writing by a Plant Health Inspector. It can also include additional restrictions on the felling of susceptible material.

If the aim is to fell the trees, remember that a felling licence is required to do so. Although infected trees are in declining health, they are still alive. Therefore, felling operations may only commence with written consent of the Forestry Commissions.

UK farmers and foresters are being urged to report any possible outbreaks of the disease through the TreeAlert online resource: <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/fthr/tree-alert/>

**Here are some of the things that can be done to prevent the introduction, establishment and spread of existing and new tree pests and diseases:**

- ✓ Ensure that shoes, vehicle tyres, or any equipment used, is disinfected, and remove any mud or plants following a forest visit;
- ✓ Walk on the clearly marked paths, and do not wander to areas that may be infected or are being monitored;
- ✗ Do not take any plant material or cuttings with you without permission.







RHAGORI AR BORI  
PROSPER FROM PASTURE

## Welsh data shows strong link between farm profit and pasture grown

Operating a simple system with high pasture utilisation is the most profitable combination on Welsh beef and sheep farms. However, analysis by Farming Connect shows that even the best-performing farm businesses must make changes to adapt to input cost inflation in 2022, or risk making a loss.

Financial benchmarking data gathered from Farming Connect's Prosper from Pasture Advanced Pro Beef and Sheep discussion group has shown a strong link between profit and pasture grown and higher stocking rates.

The group is made up of 40 farms that have been involved and progressed through the Prosper from Pasture programme since its inception in 2019. Prosper from Pasture is a continuous professional development programme developed by Farming Connect. Its objective is to develop knowledge and confidence in pasture management through an engaging mix of discussion groups and virtual and on-farm meetings that feature expert advisers and experienced farmers.

The data was gathered and analysed by James Daniel and Rhys Williams of Precision Grazing. It was taken from the farms' most recent set of

management or statutory accounts, and included variable and fixed costs. To provide a genuine 'like-for-like' comparison of business performance, it excluded rent, finance, development costs and subsidy and environment payments income. The data and the subsequent analysis threw up some interesting findings: principally that simple systems work.

*"This data has shown a positive profitability trend towards simple systems, focusing on low cost of production and high pasture to liveweight conversion," says Mr Daniels.*

### OTHER FINDINGS INCLUDED:

- **Farm size is not significant factor on profit per hectare**

*"Being big doesn't necessarily mean more profit; economies of scale have been shown to be not as effective as good management," says Mr Daniel.*

- **The first £300/ha spent on variable cost provides the most profit – after that, the likely return reduces significantly.**

This, says Mr Williams, indicates depreciating return on inputs.

*"Higher cost spend does not guarantee higher profits, indicating that the more you spend, the less output you achieve from that additional spend," he says.*

The results are variable, though: only 25% of the businesses achieved a positive return on variable cost spend.

*"Of these, the best return was 166%; the average was 55%," says Mr Williams.*

- **Efficient use of labour is key.**

Working more hours does not result in more profit – simple systems and valuing time and people are essential, says Mr Daniel.

*"Adopting simple systems, minimising number of groups and condensing lambing and calving patterns are the solution – not working harder."*

There was a slightly positive correlation shown between time allocated to management and profit, he adds.

*"People who allocate time to budgeting and planning – particularly regarding pasture management – are generally more profitable."*

- **There is a good correlation between pasture grown and profit, but this is variable depending on the level of feed conversion efficiency.**

*"Breeding ewes were found to be more efficient than breeding cows, due to more liveweight to sell per kilogramme of feed eaten," says Mr Williams.*

The businesses involved in the benchmarking, as a result of knowledge and expertise gained through the Prosper from Pasture programme, are considered to be in the top 10% for grazing management.

However, a third are predicted to make a loss in 2022, due to the increase in costs of fuel, nitrogen fertiliser and purchased concentrate feed. *"This assumes sales prices remain as per 2021," says Mr Daniel.*

However, Rhodri Jones, who oversees the Prosper from Pasture programme for Farming Connect, believes that these businesses are in a very strong position to deal with the continuous challenges facing the industry:

*"The Advanced Pro Level of the programme provides expert support for farmers who have implemented a grazing system on their farm to help them optimise their management and scale-up. The group allows ideas and experience to be shared with the aim of providing accountability, as well as support, from like-minded farmers in order to fast-track everyone's success."*

*"The good news is that it is management – not farm size or inputs – that has the largest impact on profitability. This means farm businesses can reduce their costs whilst maintaining output."*



**500 farmers in Wales have actively engaged and benefitted from the Prosper from Pasture initiative since 2019.**



## Maximising grass production and utilising every blade on a Welsh Pasture Project farm

**Since switching from a traditional compound to a foliar-applied controlled release alternative, a Pembrokeshire beef farm is maintaining grass yield while spending significantly less on fertiliser.**

Maximising grass production and utilising every blade are important targets in Peter and Jackie Storrow's beef enterprise at Rogeston Farm in Simpson Cross, where they run 120 suckler cows, a multiplier herd for the Stabiliser Cattle Company.

Since Peter embarked on the Farming Connect Prosper from Pasture programme, they have taken their grazing management a step further, from the rotational grazing system that had replaced set stocking to cell grazing. They are also growing more diverse leys.

Making more efficient use of nitrogen (N) and reducing input cost was the natural next stage. The soaring cost of fertiliser was the catalyst for trialling a foliar-applied product this spring. Since the business also grows arable crops, no investment was needed in a machine to apply it.

The Storrows opted for a 28% N controlled release fertiliser, instead of the diluted urea product more commonly associated with foliar application.

*"I was concerned about buying urea and the need for preparing it to create a usable form. It suited me better to have a ready-made product – but that is not to say that I won't look at the urea option further down the line," says Peter.*

Although the cost of both have since changed, when he bought the product in October 2021,

*Peter and Jackie Storrow*



it worked out at £30/hectare (ha), compared to £58/ha for a straight nitrogen fertiliser.

Peter applies it at 20 litres/ha when grass cover is over 2,200kgDM/ha – the equivalent of 40kgN/ha – together with 10 litres of a molasses blend as a carbon source and five litres of sulphur. Cattle are not turned onto the treated paddock for 10 days.

The results so far have been encouraging. Agrinet data from May 2022 shows daily growth of 63.3kgDM/ha on the grazing platform, compared to 59.4kg in 2021. Total farm cover at that stage of the grazing season had increased, too: to 2,538kgDM/ha from 2,158.

*"For the first two weeks in May, the fields have been averaging 65kgDM/ha, but with the better fields growing over 100," says Peter.*

*"We have made considerable savings, and we are growing comparable amounts of grass, so something is working. It is better for us, better for soil life, better all round."*

But it hasn't been without challenges and lessons learned. Red and white clover has been added to the leys with chicory and plantain, to create a more diverse sward in response to periods of very dry weather during the growing season. This, combined with the farm's medium to light loam soils, can check growth.

*"We are a dry farm, and in the last two or three years, we have been getting dry spells in April and during the summer, when grass growth stops for too long. As a result, we are moving away from perennial ryegrass towards deeper-rooting diverse species to keep things moving," says Peter.* Requirement for fertiliser application is also considerably less, he adds.

Entering grass measurements into Agrinet on a fortnightly basis enables a more efficient use of fertiliser. The Storrows share these figures with other farmers through the Farming Connect Welsh Pasture Project.

They are adapting their system to require much lower inputs, and have been trialling a more diverse multi-species ley in combination with mob grazing.

Eighteen acres are sub-divided into three 'lanes', split further to create 24-hour grazing breaks; there is a 40-day gap between grazings.

The knowledge and skills Peter has gained through the Prosper from Pasture programme has helped him and Jackie to drive efficiencies in their system.

*"Spending two years attending Prosper from Pasture meetings has helped us improve efficiencies from the soil up," he says.*



For more information about the Welsh Pasture Project, please scan the QR code, or visit: [gov.wales/farmingconnect/land/grass/welsh-pasture-project](https://gov.wales/farmingconnect/land/grass/welsh-pasture-project)



# Biodiversity on our farms

Farmers have always considered themselves stewards of the land. However, the industry is now being asked to do more than ever to help minimise its impact on the environment, and contribute to tackling climate change and biodiversity loss. With future change in policy and the restructuring of payments to businesses on the horizon, a key objective for farmers could be to enhance and improve habitats on the farm so that they can attract the best possible remuneration in payments for public goods that they can provide.

Farming Connect have commissioned biodiversity reports for three farms within their demonstration farm network across the red meat, dairy and arable sectors, to identify the state of biodiversity on our farms. The studies were undertaken by the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group, Cymru (FWAG Cymru), producing an ecological habitats and features report and an ecological vegetation species survey report for each farm.

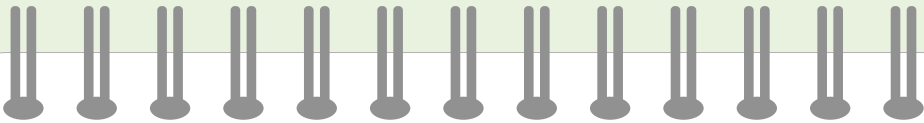
Hedgerows are one key habitat feature that has been surveyed across all three farms. Existing hedgerows on all farms were found to be in a good ecological condition, with a good integral structure. This resulted from best practice being demonstrated, showing adherence to hedgerow management principles that support the conservation of biodiversity and the quality of the habitats and eco-systems that depend on them. One example of this was the connectivity that hedgerows can provide by linking up areas of the farm. This provides corridors for wildlife to move between the different habitats, which is essential for biodiversity to function effectively on a landscape scale. New and restored hedgerows had also been established, which increased the valued biodiversity habitat and carbon sequestration potential on the farms.

Key decision factors for the farmers when considering the establishment and management

of hedgerows to meet objectives and be fit for purpose are wide-ranging. Meeting objectives took into account the economics, practicality and aesthetic impact of implementing prescriptions e.g., widening into a shelterbelt, introducing a more diverse range of species and ensuring that trees were allowed to mature within the hedgerow. Avoiding use of pesticide, fertiliser and slurry spreading within the field-edge margin was clearly seen to make a substantial difference to vegetation and species present.

It was evident that the farmers' efforts over the years have produced an impressive network of hedges. Many of the managed hedges averaged 2 metres in height and between 3m – 4m width, providing excellent shade and shelter for stock, and an ideal habitat for small birds, providing safe nesting sites for them. Since many of these established hedges surround fields used predominantly for silage and cattle grazing, the structure of these hedges can often be maintained without the use of fences. Farmers who practised rotational grazing recognised that hedges had regained their structural integrity once this practice had been adopted.

As livestock were moved into another paddock after one to two days (rather than grazing the whole field for a period of weeks), the grazing of hedgerows was minimal. The cutting of hedgerows into an A-shape was also recognised as being beneficial to field-edge margins. Box-shape cut hedges produce a drip line to the detriment of survival and longevity of ground vegetation and flora, as well as the insects that feed off them. These were seen to be more abundant under A-shape edges. It was also noted that, from a livestock grazing perspective, the coarser grasses and vegetation at the field edge provided an alternative forage to lush ryegrass, specifically for young stock, contributing to a healthy rumen.



## A range of habitats and features were identified on all farms:

- ✓ woodland
- ✓ individual and parkland trees
- ✓ orchard
- ✓ grassland (*agriculturally improved grassland; acidic upland grassland; marshy grassland*)
- ✓ ponds
- ✓ streamside corridors
- ✓ watercourses
- ✓ earth banks
- ✓ dry stone walls
- ✓ traditional buildings
- ✓ disused quarry
- ✓ farm tracks
- ✓ farm lanes

Keep an eye out for further details from the surveys being published on the Farming Connect website over the summer.

# Farm diversification: what drives changes to the farm business?

by Dr David Cutress, Farming Connect Knowledge Exchange Hub, IBERS Aberystwyth University

**50%** of UK farms gained some form of their income from non-farming diversification. Research suggests that diversification action comes from a mix of pressures and incentives:

## PRESSURES

- Market competition from large businesses
- Cost-price squeezes
- Policy/legislation
- Social pressures (consumer perspectives)
- Family succession – family employment
- Economic pressures
- Environmental performance pressures

## INCENTIVES

- Reduce/spread financial risk
- Utilise idle resources
- Government or external subsidies
- Available advice and training
- Personal agenda/progression
- Access new customers base
- Serendipity (triggered by chance findings)



Diversification and entrepreneurial activity is far more likely given 'pulls', rather than 'pushes'



Family co-operation and business clustering is one option for mitigating some of the risks of diversification.



Training & up-skilling around diversification and entrepreneurial activities is key for future sustainable succession.

Diversification options can open new revenue streams but need consideration based on infrastructure and locality. These can occur internally in the sector or external of the sector.

## INTERNAL

- Alternative crops
- Alternative livestock/management
- Alternative production strategies
- Reducing the food chain
- Alternative produce
- Contracting for other farmers
- Land leasing

## EXTERNAL

- **Agritourism** (*most commonly researched*)
- **Retail** (*most commonly researched*)
- Training
- Contracting
- Alternative fuels and waste utilisation
- Renewable energy

## Barriers to diversification

### INTERNAL

- Lack of resources (time, labour & focus)
- Lack of equipment
- Insufficient, or lack of, skills
- Inadequate finances
- Inflexible behaviours (traditionalism)
- Unsuitable location
- Digital infrastructure

### EXTERNAL

- Global competition
- Regulations, legislation/unsupportive government
- Market changes
- Undeveloped networks and eco-systems
- Inappropriate infrastructure
- Lack of, or insufficient, knowledge exchange/training



Advice, training, mentoring and skills development by experts, as well as between peers, through workshops, innovation networks and other schemes is a vital route for improving diversification, according to research. For more information, please see the **Farming Connect website**.



## Drones and satellites can help grassland farmers make better use of inputs and inform reseeding decisions

The farm-level project highlights that remote sensors can provide important information on how grass responds to inputs in greater detail and more rapidly than if farmers manually measured with a rising plate meter.

Tramline trials were established on three Welsh grassland farms for the three-year EIP Wales project to allow data to be gathered on how swards responded to different agronomic situations. A drone, satellite technology and a rising plate meter were used to collect that information and the results compared.

Growth in different grass and clover mixes was monitored, together with responses to varying application rates of sulphur fertiliser. The trial also looked at how grass reacted to slurry inputs and other treatments, including grass growth promoters and seaweed extract.

The remote technology uses a system known as 'spectral reflectance', which can estimate crop canopy leaf area. One of the measurements used in the trial was WDRVI (Wide Dynamic Range Vegetation Index), which is an index of plant greenness and canopy size. Analysis of the information from this technology showed it could detect significant differences in the agronomic treatments applied on the project farms – data that could not be picked up by the plate meter.

The project also showed important differences in the data available from the two remote sensing methods: the drone could detect the smallest treatment differences at a level two or three times smaller than the satellite used.

However, ADAS consultant Katie Evans, who managed the project, says the results of the trial demonstrate that farmers can be confident in using either technology to estimate grass biomass on their farms and to work out if the agronomic treatments they are using increase grass biomass, and to what extent.

New forage harvester systems can map grass yield, but relatively few farmers have access to this technology, says Ms Evans. This contrasts to the arable sector, where most combine harvesters have yield monitors that produce yield maps to enable growers to understand the effects of different agronomic treatments.

*“Grass and forage producers are not able to do this easily or quickly using a rising plate meter, and risk falling behind, in terms of rate of productivity improvement,”* says Ms Evans.

However, there are caveats. Drones require a farmer to have technical expertise to operate

and collect data; alternatively, a specialised contractor could be used. Expertise is also needed to acquire data from satellites, and it can only be captured in cloudless conditions.

*“Both drone and satellite data require specialist analytical skills to test whether an agronomic treatment has had a statistically significant effect on grass growth,”* says Ms Evans.

### HOW THE COSTS STACK UP

Using a drone to detect treatment differences worked out as the most expensive option in this project – it cost around £850 for a typical size field. In comparison, satellite data from the Sentinel-2 satellite was free, but to access it required in the region of £200-worth of consultant's time for each field.

The process of analysing the data to statistically test the effects of agronomic treatments increased the budget further; for the drone, it was around £400 a field, and for the satellite £250.

Ms Evans says these costs (which don't include VAT) are reliant on the farmer being able to provide GPS coordinates, and for there being no requirement for additional consultant visits.



The drone that was used in the project to measure grass yields remotely.

WDRVI data captured by satellite at Hardwick Farm, near Abergavenny, one of the three farms involved in the project.

WDRVI	
●	0.1974 - 0.3299
●	0.3299 - 0.3561
●	0.3561 - 0.369
●	0.369 - 0.3855
●	0.3855 - 0.3946
●	0.3946 - 0.4027
●	0.4027 - 0.4159
●	0.4159 - 0.4432
●	0.4432 - 0.4899
●	0.4899 - 0.5286

*“Having this information, which I would never have captured from weighing silage trailers, will help inform my reseeding decisions,”* says Mr Jones, who produces milk in a robot milking system.

Although the cost associated with capturing the data is not insignificant, Mr Jones says with soaring input costs, he is confident that the financial outlay could be quickly recouped.



## Off to pastures new...

### 14 focused, ambitious farmers selected for Farming Connect Management Exchange 2022

From carbon sequestration to growing heritage wheat types, and from new Welsh tea plantations to animal health – these are just a few of the diverse topics under investigation for the 14 candidates selected for Farming Connect's Management Exchange programme this year.

The programme, now in its seventh year, encourages farmers and foresters to learn about new or improved ways of working, to access research and see at first-hand how some of the most successful systems in the farming, food and land-based industries operate. Successful participants disseminate the findings from their learning experience through Farming Connect's usual communications channels and events programme to ensure their new knowledge is shared with the wider industry.

Chair of this year's judging panel Eirwen Williams, director of rural programmes with Menter a Busnes (which, alongside Lantra Wales, delivers Farming Connect on behalf of the Welsh Government and European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development),

said that this year's intake planned to visit exemplar businesses and universities in the UK, Germany, France, Austria, the Netherlands, Sweden, Poland, Hungary and Latvia.

*"The learning and outcomes already being implemented by many previous Management Exchange candidates augur well for the long-term sustainability and viability of farming businesses in Wales."*

*"Importantly, the results of this programme will also benefit future generations – the young farmers already working in the industry, whose long-term commitment and loyalty we must nurture – as well as those entering the industry for the first time,"* said Mrs Williams. She explained that candidates also have the opportunity to host a suitably trained and experienced farm or forestry manager at their home holding.

Detailed information on each of this year's candidates, including where they plan to visit, and what they hope to learn, can be found at [gov.wales/farmingconnect](https://gov.wales/farmingconnect)

#### EMMA DUFFY



**Location:** Caernarfon, Gwynedd  
**Destination:** Netherlands, Germany, UK  
**Topic:** Chicken gender determination

#### MARC HARRIES



**Location:** Llandysul, Ceredigion  
**Destination:** Scotland, Germany  
**Topic:** Future proofing the family farm without subsidies

#### NAOMI HOPE



**Location:** Nevers, Pembrokeshire  
**Destination:** France  
**Topic:** Growing and processing organic herbs for Welsh teas

#### BEN JAMES



**Location:** Lampeter, Ceredigion  
**Destination:** England  
**Topic:** Self-sufficiency for first-generation farmers

#### DAN JONES



**Location:** Great Orme, Llandudno  
**Destination:** Latvia, France  
**Topic:** Farming, conservation and carbon sequestration

#### TOM JONES



**Location:** Welshpool, Powys  
**Destination:** Scotland  
**Topic:** Factors affecting suckler cow profitability

#### NICOLA LEWIS



**Location:** Pontyclun, Rhondda Cynon Taff  
**Destination:** Ireland, England  
**Topic:** Developing a silvopasture system and farm education programme

#### JAMIE MCCOY



**Location:** Newcastle Emlyn, Ceredigion  
**Destination:** The Netherlands, Austria  
**Topic:** Short supply chains

#### GERALD MILES



**Location:** St Davids, Pembrokeshire  
**Destination:** France, Austria, Poland, Hungary  
**Topic:** Regen growth of ancient wheat

#### SOPHIA MORGAN-SWINHOE



**Location:** Bow Street, Ceredigion  
**Destination:** Ireland  
**Topic:** Developing cheese that reflects the farm and area it is from

#### JOHN SAVAGE-ONSTWEDDER



**Location:** Llandysul, Ceredigion  
**Destination:** Sweden  
**Topic:** Distilling birch tree sap to make alcohol

#### ROLAND WEAR



**Location:** Llangammarch Wells, Powys  
**Destination:** England, Scotland, Europe  
**Topic:** Setting up a 'wellbeing' farm diversification project

#### REBECCA WILLIAMS



**Location:** Llandrindod Wells, Powys  
**Destination:** UK  
**Topic:** Marketing red meat directly to consumers

#### LOTTIE WILSON



**Location:** Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire  
**Destination:** Nottingham, Liverpool  
**Topic:** Detection, prevention and management of dairy lameness



The Water Resources (Control of Agricultural Pollution) (Wales) Regulations 2021 requires all farms to maintain a risk map, to help prevent pollution incidents and to help you comply with the requirements of the regulations. You must maintain a risk map of your holding from 1 January 2023.

**The risk map must show:**

- each field, with its area in hectares;
- all surface waters;
- any boreholes, springs or wells on the holding or within 50 metres of the holding boundary;
- areas with sandy or shallow soils;
- land with a slope of more than 12 degrees (equivalent to 20% or 1 in 5);
- land within 10 metres of surface waters;
- land within 6 metres of surface waters if you intend to apply organic manure using precision spreading equipment up to 6 metres from surface water;
- land within 50 metres of a borehole, spring or well;
- land drains (other than sealed impermeable pipes);
- sites suitable for temporary field heaps, if this method of storing manure is to be used; and
- land that has a low run-off risk, if such land is to be used when calculating slurry storage requirements.

The risk map can be used to ensure compliance with other aspects of the regulations. You will need to take account of the features within your risk map when undertaking a field inspection and assessing if there is a risk of nitrogen getting into surface waters.

It will also help to identify the land available for the spreading of manures, which may impact how you undertake your nutrient management planning.

You can complete a risk map in any format you choose, provided the required features are clearly marked and visible.

**What the risk map can also show (optional)**

The risk maps can also be used to identify features where it would not be appropriate to spread organic manure, but are not a requirement of the regulations, including:

- any areas where you may not be allowed to spread for reasons such as a tenancy agreement, or a designation (e.g. Site of Special Scientific Interest);
- areas categorised as a “wildlife habitat” under an agri-environment agreement (e.g. Glastir), plus any other areas where an agreement prohibits spreading (e.g. low-input land);
- areas where the surface is rocky or uneven so that equipment cannot be used effectively or safely;
- fields or part fields which in the last 12 months have been pipe-drained, mole-drained or sub-soiled over drains;
- areas of woodland or orchards.

**Updating and maintaining records of your risk map**

You must update the risk map with any changes within three months of the change occurring. This could be adding or taking away land, or changing or adding the location of a new feature, such as a temporary field site. You must keep all copies of your risk map for a minimum of five years.



# LEARN NEW SKILLS...

plan ahead

Sarah Evans is a beef and sheep farmer from Glamorgan. Hari Roberts is a beef and sheep farmer from Denbigh. Both credit Farming Connect's subsidised training courses with giving them new skills and knowledge which they utilise every day.



"Learning how to tackle business planning gave me the skills and confidence to focus on the farm's long-term business strategy. I also undertook a diversification course which really focused my thinking, and is helping me prepare for setting up a new agri-tourism business."

Sarah Evans, Glamorgan



"Thanks to business management training, I now do the books at home, which means I can monitor cashflow and make better decisions. I also learned how to lead and manage farm workers. On the practical side, improved shearing skills are already saving the farm time and money."

Hari Roberts, Denbigh

We have a comprehensive range of accredited short courses to choose from with approved providers located throughout Wales. Visit our website to check out eligibility and availability.

## The next Farming Connect skills application window will be open from 09:00 on 04/07/22 until 17:00 on 29/07/22

If you are not already personally registered with an individual email address, and you plan to apply for funded training, call the Service Centre on 08456 000 813 before 17:00 on 25/07/22.



For an up-to-date list of all currently available training courses and/or support on how to apply, or for information about other training options (including fully-funded e-learning), visit [gov.wales/farmingconnectskillsandtraining](https://gov.wales/farmingconnectskillsandtraining). Alternatively, contact your local development officer or call the Service Centre on 08456 000 813.

# Performance... growth... productivity...

Are your beef or dairy cattle achieving optimum results?

## Is it time to change your parasite control practices?

- ➔ Enhance herd health to improve performance and productivity
- ➔ Learn which clinical signs indicate parasites and how to prevent or control them
- ➔ Understand which pasture and grazing systems pose the highest risk
- ➔ Learn how weather conditions impact on the prevalence of parasites in cattle
- ➔ Invest in the correct anthelmintic treatments, given at the right time and frequency
- ➔ Practise better biosecurity regimes, isolate incoming cattle, reduce the risks

## Animal health issues affect not only your stock, but profitability, too.

Attending this fully-funded animal health workshop will help you ensure your livestock achieve optimum results.

Learn how to identify clinical signs, diagnose, treat, control and avoid a wide range of typical parasites and related topics affecting beef and dairy cattle, including:

Liver fluke	Lungworm
Gutworms	External parasites
Parasites affecting youngstock	Pasture and grazing regimes/risk levels
Anthelmintic treatments/resistance	Biosecurity

Provided by approved farm vet practices throughout Wales, each three-hour workshop (online or in small face-to-face groups) will give you the information and practical knowledge you need, plus guidance on animal health planning and biosecurity.

For further information on workshop content, dates and a full list of participating vet practices, visit [gov.wales/farmingconnectskillsandtraining](https://gov.wales/farmingconnectskillsandtraining). Alternatively, call the Farming Connect Service Centre on **08456 000 813** or contact your local development officer.



# Ignorance is definitely not bliss when it comes to farm safety...training saves lives!

Farming can be repetitive! Same old...same old? A day in the life of a farmer is often predictable. Is this what causes complacency? Is this why there were 41 lives lost on British farms during the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) reporting period of 2020/21?

Rachel Hughes is an instructor with one of Wales' leading land-based training providers, JHS Ltd. Approved to deliver training by Lantra Wales, Farming Connect and other well-known organisations relating to farming, forestry and food production, Rachel explains why training saves lives and on a more practical level, saves money too.



Rachel is the wife of Jimmy Hughes, also an experienced qualified trainer. Together with Jimmy's dad John Hughes, this family firm has been delivering Lantra Wales and Farming Connect-approved land-based courses for many years. Perhaps most relevantly, they are also farmers.

"We 'get' the issues that farmers have with taking time off for training purposes - something that on the face of it, isn't actually making them money if they're away from the business and their livestock," says Rachel.

But as Rachel says, undergoing training is one of the best investments you'll ever make! Here's a short list to remind you why!

## Farm safety training enables farmers to...

- ✓ run their businesses more efficiently, saving them time and money
- ✓ reduce their reliance on out-sourcing tasks they have the skills to tackle themselves, including routine maintenance and safety checks of vehicles and machinery
- ✓ provide critical evidence of competencies to comply with legislative requirements and for farm assurance schemes
- ✓ work safely, reducing the risk of farm accidents for themselves, family members, workers and farm visitors.

## Q. Why is farm safety training so important?

**A.** Handling machinery; driving farm vehicles such as tractors and quad bikes, working with telehandlers, trailed vehicles, chainsaws, handling large livestock, working at heights or with silos, handling dangerous substances such as pesticides (NB this is not a comprehensive list!) can all be dangerous. It is why investing in training gives you the skills, competencies and guidance on properly maintained equipment and systems, which reduce the risks of farm accidents.

## Q. What are the most common causes of farm and forestry accidents?

**A.** The most common causes of farm accidents are being struck by moving vehicles; being injured by animals; in contact with machinery; being struck by an object; being injured falling from heights.

## Q. What can I do to reduce the risks?

**A.** Undertake training to help you identify hazards, reduce risks and implement control measures that lead to safer working practices.

Farming Connect training courses (subsidised by up to 80% for registered individuals); one-to-one fully-funded farm-safety mentoring, on-line guidance and free information materials will give you practical advice on a wide range of farm health and safety topics.

## For further information...

- Visit [www.hse.gov.uk/agriculture/resources/pdf/good-farm.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/agriculture/resources/pdf/good-farm.pdf)
- Visit [businesswales.gov.wales/farmingconnect/health-and-safety](http://businesswales.gov.wales/farmingconnect/health-and-safety)
- Keep up to date with @FarmSafetyWales on Facebook and Twitter



Farming Connect's next skills application window will open from **04.07.2022** to **29.07.2022** (See Page 18 for further information)

# Keeping children safe on farm during the Summer holidays

1. Children should not be allowed in the farm workplace (and for young children, they should enjoy outdoor space in a secure fenced area).
2. Any access to the work area by children under 16 – for example, for education, or knowledge/experience – should be planned and fully supervised by an adult not engaged in any work activity.
3. Children under the age of 13 years are specifically prohibited from driving or riding on any agricultural machine.

For more information, scan here:



or search: [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

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## Farming Connect one-to-one on-farm clinics

Our one-to-one clinics are fully-funded sampling and advice clinics on a range of topics. Each Farming Connect registered business is eligible to apply for **up to two clinics** from the list below. Clinics will be delivered by independent consultants and all advice will be confidential.

Each business will receive a clinic report, including the following:

- Introduction to the topic
- Results of the samples or visit
- Recommendation(s) for improvement

✓ **To be eligible for the on-farm clinics, the business must be registered with Farming Connect and have a CRN, CPH and a minimum of 3 hectares.**

### CLINICS AVAILABLE:



#### Soils clinic

- Five standard soil samples
- Three samples for bulk density and organic matter
- Receive recommendations on how to improve soil quality



#### Manure clinic

- Apply for two manure samples from e.g. slurry, farmyard manure (FYM) or poultry/pig manure
- Analyse the value of your manure and understand how best to utilise it



#### Infrastructure clinic

- Apply for infrastructure advice, which will cover all your buildings, yards and slurry storage facilities
- Separate clean and dirty water effectively
- Ensure your farm complies, or is planning to comply, with current and future water regulations

Please note that soil sampling can only be undertaken in the correct conditions. Please talk to your Local Development Officer for more information.



If you would like to register for any of the above support, please contact your Local Development Officer, scan the QR code, or visit [gov.wales/farmingconnect](http://gov.wales/farmingconnect).



# One-to-one surgeries

Free one-to-one advice with a consultant on their specialised topic. The surgery will enable you to gain advice and guidance specific to your business.

## Topics available:

- Business and Business Performance • **STAFF MANAGEMENT**
- **MARKETING AND DIVERSIFICATION** • Agriculture and Succession Law
- Financial Planning and Accountancy • **Planning and Development**
- **Carbon Footprinting** • Milking Parlour Design and Efficiency
- **Infrastructure** • MILK QUALITY • **Energy Efficiency / Renewable Energy**

- **WOODLAND** • **Grassland Management and Forage Crops**
- Feed and Fertiliser • **SOIL ANALYSIS** • Biodiversity / Habitat / Regenerative Agriculture • Precision Farming (GPS technology etc)

- **Handling Systems** • NUTRITION • **Calf Management**
- Animal Health • **Poultry Ventilation**

*\*Topics may be subject to change\* 1-hour digital appointments  
Businesses must be registered with Farming Connect*

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## BOOK YOUR SURGERY TODAY:

Phone us on **08456 000 813**

Scan the QR code, or visit our website: [gov.wales/farmingconnect](https://gov.wales/farmingconnect)

Contact your local development officer

