

THE MAGAZINE FOR FARMING & FORESTRY IN WALES

FARMING connect



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Feed budget
& Decision making

Working together
to make farming safer




Cwmwlfa Amcangyfrifoliadau Eiddo ar
Tŷffwr Ddiwydiol Gwledol
Eiddo ar y Budoeddni mewn Arian Gwledol Cymdeith
European Agricultural Fund for
Rural Development
Europe Investing in Rural Areas


Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Jack Lydiate

Tynyberth, Abbey-Cwm-Hir, Llandrindod Wells
Farming Connect Demonstration Site



INTRODUCTION

Tynyberth, a 500 acre organic hill farm is run by Jack Lydiate in partnership with his parents John and Lynne. The farm consists of 200 acres with a further 300 acres of enclosed hill a short distance away. Jack has set out to improve the productivity of the farm whilst still maintaining low-cost and low-labour principles. Ewes are overwintered on silage and housed in late winter ahead of lambing indoors. They're turned out shortly after lambing with twin rearing ewes given access to better grazing on the farm. All lambs are sold as stores.

As part of being a Farming Connect demonstration farm Jack has focused on improving the productivity of the flock of Welsh Mountain ewes by:

- reseeding over 20 acres using new grass varieties and trialling the performance of various legumes in combination with soil sampling.
- reducing lameness levels from nearly 10% to less than 2% by implementing the five-point lameness plan.
- improving scanning results through targeting ewe condition score ahead of tupping and harder culling.
- moving from an early March to end of March lambing system to better match grass growth in the spring.

- investigating barren ewe rates and the use of vaccination to improve scanning percentage.
- introducing crossbred rams to increase the size of ewe lamb replacements.
- reducing winter feed costs by focusing on improving silage quality and testing samples ahead of feeding out.
- testing to identify the most appropriate liver fluke treatments at different times of the year.
- taking part in research work to better understand and map the presence of mud snails which host the liver fluke parasite.
- planting 120 acres of forestry through the Woodland Creation Scheme, a move that guarantees a long-term income for the business and makes better use of marginal land.

Flock health planning with Jack's vet and advice from a grassland consultant have both been integral to the improvements by Jack and with a full-time job the productivity improvements have been made with no increase in labour requirements. Moving forward Jack is keen to develop the farm to become as self-sufficient as possible.

National Johne's Management Plan (NJMP)

The Action Group on Johne's is an open forum for industry stakeholders interested in tackling Johne's disease, jointly funded by AHDB Dairy and milk purchasers.

The National Johne's Management Plan (NJMP) was developed by the Action Group on Johne's to help manage and then reduce incidence of Johne's disease in dairy cattle by engaging 80% of milk purchasers and dairy farmers in Great Britain in credible and robust Johne's management activities.

The majority of milk processor companies are now participants/members in the National Action Group on Johne's. All farmers supplying purchaser members by the 31st October 2018 will need to have a written Johne's Disease Management Plan in place. This plan will confirm that a farmer has assessed the risks and herd status through testing and put in place the necessary management information and resources to implement one of the six Control Strategies.

Johne's disease is a chronic intestinal disease which if cows remain in the herd long enough will appear to waste away. Livestock are usually infected as calves by drinking infected colostrum/milk or by ingesting faeces. Infected cows shed billions of the bacteria into the environment which causes infection. Many infected animals will not show clinical signs of the disease until later in life hence the need for testing.

The disease will cause a reduced yield, increase rate of mastitis and cell count and hence premature culling.

The National Johne's Management Plan is to engage farmers in reducing the incidence of the disease:

The six control strategies are -

- Biosecurity protect & monitor - This is suitable for herds who complete appropriate screening tests and have no evidence of the disease.
- Improved Farm Management - The cycle between cow and calf needs to be broken through changes of management at calving, colostrum/milk management. All cows are treated as infected as no individual testing takes place.
- Improved Farm Management & Strategic Testing - Individual cow testing to identify infected cows and management to break the cycle between cow and calf.
- Improved Farm Management Test & Cull - Culling of infected cows rather than retain and manage.
- Breed to Terminal Sire - No replacements are retained and replacements are purchased from herds with a lower level of Johne's disease.
- Firebreak Vaccination - Vaccination may not be suitable and veterinary advice must be undertaken.

Why not try out interactive E-learning course - Johne's disease in cattle. For more information please see the website www.actionjohnesuk.org

Join Farming Connect at our Eradicating Johne's from your herd events between **7:30 - 9:30** at the following locations:

03/10/18 - Ruthin Mart, Ruthin
09/10/18 - Elephant & Castle, Newtown
10/10/18 - The Halfway Inn, Nantgaredig

Animal disease surveillance – why it matters to livestock keepers

Gavin Watkins - Welsh Government Senior Veterinary Officer.

What is it?

Surveillance for animal diseases is the ability to detect threats to animal and public health and animal welfare in a timely way so that they can be managed before they cause serious damage – either to individual herds or flocks or to whole sectors.

There are two main types of surveillance for disease threats:

1. **Active** surveillance is the planned surveys that look for specific diseases or infections, for example, the surveillance that is done for salmonellosis in commercial poultry flocks, or Gwardedu BVD sampling.
2. **Scanning** (or passive) surveillance is the on-going investigation of disease events which results in diagnoses that are collated and analysed. Active surveillance is “top-down”, while scanning surveillance is “bottom-up” and starts with the livestock keeper, then their vet, then a diagnostic facility and finally a data analyser (see Figure 1). This article will focus on scanning surveillance.

Why is it done?

Scanning surveillance detects many types of disease threats to farms and to entire countries.

Who benefits?

Everyone! The animals themselves, as surveillance helps to protect them from disease threats. Farmers, as it is an important part of reducing the risk to their businesses. Processors and consumers, as it helps to ensure the safety of the food chain. Government, as it maintains Wales’ and UK’s health status required for international trade, and protects public health and the health of the national herds and flocks.

What is the role of farmers?

Successful disease surveillance starts with livestock keepers, whose role is critical. Your role starts with good stockmanship and spotting when animals are not themselves, either showing signs of diseases or just performing or behaving differently. After your own investigation, you should inform your vet, who may examine the animals or take samples. Your other key role is to be aware of the findings of disease

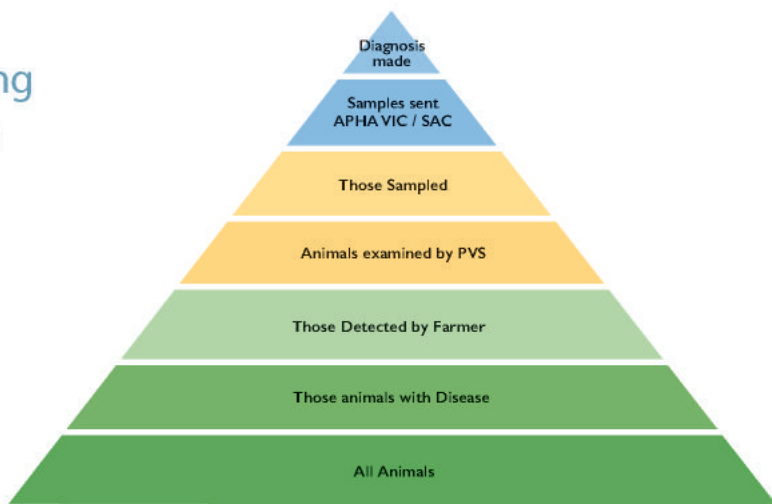
surveillance, especially in your area, as these may require you to take action to protect your animals. For example, surveillance contributes to parasite alerts. The findings of surveillance are published by the **APHA** <http://apha.defra.gov.uk/vet-gateway/surveillance/scanning/disease-dashboards.htm> and **NADIS** <http://www.nadis.org.uk/>.

What are the arrangements for scanning surveillance in Wales?

All of the vet practices in Wales form part of the surveillance network. The regular exchange of information between vets and livestock keepers is crucial, with information from samples from vets sent to

labs being analysed and collated, and trends determined. Post mortem examination of animals that have died provides most information on the causes of disease. Three veterinary post mortem facilities serve Wales – the APHA Vet Investigation Centres in Carmarthen and Shrewsbury and the Wales Vet Science Centre in Aberystwyth. Post mortems are heavily subsidised to make them affordable. Free collection and transport of appropriate carcasses is available for farms more than one hour's drive from a Centre. Further information is available from your vet, the **APHA** <http://apha.defra.gov.uk/vet-gateway/surveillance/diagnostic/pme.htm> and the **WVSC** <http://www.wvsc.wales/>.

Figure 1
The “scanning surveillance pyramid”



● Summary of Scanning Surveillance Outputs & Benefits

- • Prompt detection of notifiable disease
- • Detection of possible zoonotic disease
- • Detect endemic diseases that impact on productivity
- • Prompt detection of new diseases or threats that may impact society
- • Prompt detection of 'chemical food safety' threats
- • Identify threats to international trade
- • Fulfil statutory national and international disease reporting requirements
- • Enable a diagnosis
- • Identify animal welfare problems
- • Maintain the infrastructure and expertise for national control programmes
- • Maintain engagement with veterinary practitioners, farmers and industry
- • Identify suspect adverse reactions to medicines used in animals
- • Maintain a knowledge base about animal health status, to provide expert consultancy
- • Maintain adequate database to store and retrieve veterinary surveillance information
- • Inform the need for targeted surveillance and research
- • Provide a sample 'bank' or biological archive

● Some recent examples of scanning surveillance findings

- • Summer Scour Syndrome in weaned calves
- • Increasing diversity in strains of porcine reproductive and respiratory (PRRS) virus in pigs
- • Sheep Scab mites resistant to injectable treatments (macrocyclic lactones) identified
- • Infection with *Nematodirus lamae* worms identified in alpacas in the UK
- • Adenoviral diseases in boiler & layer chickens
- • New rabbit haemorrhagic disease 2 variant virus (RHD2) in wild and domestic rabbits in GB

Lamb finishing at Trefnant Isaf, Farming Connect Focus Site

Lisa Roberts, Red Meat technical officer, Farming Connect

A harsh spring followed by an unusually dry summer could have impacted lamb performance, but good ewe nutrition and careful monitoring of grass growth has paid off for Farming Connect focus farmer Aled Haynes at Trefnant Isaf. His crossbred lambs have grown well to weaning at 12 weeks, achieving approximately 350g and 300g per day for singles and twins respectively, meaning they more than met the 30Kg target at weaning.

The total mixed ration (TMR) fed last winter ensured the ewes were getting a consistently high-quality feed which met their needs. At lambing the ewes were in good body condition and milked well, despite the weather conditions, this was reflected in the good 8 week weights achieved by the lambs. Aled also noted that he was able to reduce wastage and ewes seemed to be more content while housed.

After weaning lamb growth rates slowed down, which we would expect as lambs become less efficient, but at an average of 270g/day at the end of July, they were still doing well. However, monitoring showed that the amount of grass available was falling so to reduce grazing pressure creep was introduced to some of the lambs. Faecal egg counts (FEC) have also been monitored to ensure a worm burden was not slowing growth and any treatments were properly targeted.

Aled will continue to monitor grass growth so he can plan ahead for next spring. A key aim is not to graze too tight because he must avoid removing the bottom leaf which will impact on grass availability for ewes and lambs post lambing next year. He will consider:

- **Applying 25kgN/ha in late summer/early autumn.**
- **Creep feeding finishing lambs or possibly bring a group indoors for finishing.**
- **Selling stock to reduce the pressure-**
 - Lambs as stores
 - Cull ewes/rams
 - Surplus ewe lambs
- **Housing ewes earlier pre-lambing**
- **Reseeding in early autumn with high yielding forage crops**



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WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE FARMING SAFER

Stop...think...stay safe on your farm
Top tips to make your farm a safer place to work



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**Invites you to
'SAVING LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS'**

Short practical demonstrations that could help you reduce the risks of farm accidents and injuries.

- General farm safety, including child safety
- Safe handling of livestock
- Working at heights
- Operating all-terrain vehicles safely
- Safe use of farm machinery – lift truck and tractors
- Handling chemicals safely

All are welcome to the events:

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
Wednesday 24 October 2018	IBERS, Aberystwyth University, Gogerddan, Aberystwyth. SY23 3EE	13:00 – 16:00
Thursday 25 October 2018	Great Tre-rhew Farm, Llanvetherine, Abergavenny, NP7 8RA	13:00 – 16:00

Booking essential – please visit:

www.gov.wales/farmingconnect or contact **08456 000 813**
farmingconnect@menterabusnes.co.uk



N-min Test – Beneficial for farmer and environment

Gethin Prys Davies, Red Meat technical officer, Farming Connect

As part of the precision farming project at Plas, Anglesey a Farming Connect Demonstration Site, Arwyn Jones is aiming to utilise the farm's inorganic and organic fertilisers as efficiently as possible. Historically, soil potassium and phosphate levels were measured using the standard soil test with nitrogen applied based on the RB209 recommendations for the specific crop.

With nitrogen fertiliser a significant annual crop investment, Arwyn wanted to make sure he was applying the optimum levels of nitrogen. Under application results in lower yields and protein content and over application can lead to wasted money, crop lodging and potential damages to the environment.

With a large amount of farm yard manure produced on the farm as a result of the beef finishing enterprise, he was keen to know exactly how much of the nitrogen in the organic fertiliser applied was available to the crops he is growing.

Working with his agronomist, Arwyn is now routinely using the nitrogen-min test on fields designated for cereal crops and forage maize. This test tells him how much nitrogen is currently available in the soil, and how much nitrogen will become available to the crop over the growing season. Inorganic nitrogen application is then calculated based on these results.

This detailed approach has meant that Arwyn has been pleasantly surprised at how little purchased inorganic nitrogen some fields have required due to the high levels of nitrogen already in the soil.

"Neighbouring fields can have very different soil nitrogen levels as a result of past management practices and cropping history. At a cost of £90 per field, this test eliminates any guess work from N application and helps me to try and grow crops as cost effectively as possible".



Feed Budgeting & Decision Making

James Daniels, Precision Grazing Ltd

2018 so far has been the most challenging grazing season that I and many other farmers have experienced.

Feed budgeting has been an essential tool and something Rhidian Glyn, Rhiwgriafol, a Farming Connect Demonstration Site has been practising by measuring his average farm cover using a platometer on a monthly basis and comparing it to his farm plan created using a program called FARMAX. You cannot control the weather but the earlier you can detect that things are not going to plan the more options you have.

In the heifer grazing system the feed budget showed that despite there appearing to be a surplus of grass, growth was dropping below demand (50kgDM/ha), so the decision was made not to cut some of the paddocks for silage. This enabled the rotation length to be increased to provide 50 days rest whilst maintaining heifer intakes with DLWG in June at 1.15kg/day.

As pasture growth rates continued to drop with the dry weather 11 acres of 2nd cut silage ground was used to extend the rest period and ensure that the heifers maintained intakes during the 6 week bulling period. Concentrate feed at 1.5kg/hd/day was introduced in mid-July to supplement pasture.

Rain at the end of July brought some relief with rotational grazed pasture being the quickest to respond. Focus now is on carefully building the farm cover to enable heifer intakes to be increased, ensuring they reach their target weight, supplement feeding will continue until growth reaches demand.

This year is going to reduce farm profit due to increased feed cost and reduced production per ha. Therefore it is critical that it does not have a negative effect on next year's production.



Feed Efficiency

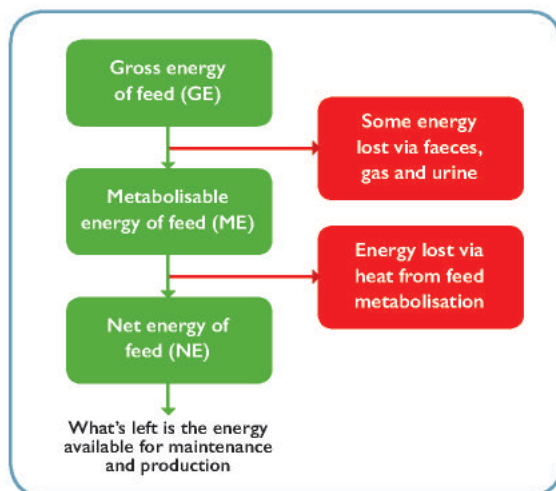
Farming Connect - Knowledge Exchange Hub

Why is it important?

Meat and milk production may be increased by selecting animals that use their feed more efficiently and in so doing, also meet climate change objectives for lower methane emissions. Feed efficiency (FE) of ruminants is going to be an essential area to focus on in the future.

What is it?

Feed efficiency is a trait for how well an animal uses the energy from feed for production – essentially, how well the gross energy (GE) of a feed is converted into net energy (NE) - see Box 1. Current research is trying to improve the energy conversion of feed in the animal, primarily through the animal's genetic potential for feed efficiency (FE). Feed efficiency is commonly measured in terms of residual feed intake, (RFI) so an animal that has a high FE will have a low RFI. Recent research has demonstrated that low RFI beef heifers for example, take in 6% less feed than high RFI heifers - they simply have a greater digestive ability. Further research needs to be completed to investigate if this is linked to the microbial population in the rumen.



Residual feed intake is difficult to measure on-farm as the dry matter intake (DMI) of each animal must be accurately assessed. Therefore a proxy measure must be developed that can be used in practice, whether that's a genetic estimated breeding value (GEBV) or a phenotypic trait.

Genetic traits:

- The genetics of FE in the animal have been examined based on the evidence that FE is affected by the digestive ability of an animal. Through analysis of 4,900 cows in three different countries, heritability for RFI is estimated at around

0.17. At present, it appears that RFI is a relatively stable trait and so would be an appropriate trait to include in a breeding programme. With the development of genomic selection based on single nucleotide polymorphism (SNP) markers related to FE, selection for the trait can be strengthened in practice.

- A current five-year Innovate-UK funded project is working to develop estimated breeding values for Stabiliser cattle based on net feed efficiency. To be able to establish net FE the project involves accurately measuring feed intake and live weight gain in individual cattle.

Phenotypic traits:

- Ruminants require the microbial population in the rumen to help breakdown their natural diet. Researchers believe that some microbiomes may be more efficient than others, indeed a recent study found that digestive ability accounted for up to 31% of RFI variation in dairy cattle when fed a high fibre diet, but had no effect in high starch diets. Studies have also found that the microbial profile of the rumen is associated with RFI in beef cattle. Other variables, which can also affect the ruminal microbiome, including host age, species, health and antibiotic use need to be taken into consideration.

- Within the rumen there is a subset of microorganisms that produce methane, called methanogens. Methane production is associated with inefficiency, as its production in the rumen requires energy. Thus, more energy efficient animals emit 20-26% less methane than their inefficient counterparts. It has been demonstrated that inefficient cattle have a less diverse population of methanogens.

Finally, researchers are working to develop an easy to use phenotypic tool to identify feed efficient animals. Such work has focused around biomarkers, emissions and behaviours e.g. heifers with higher FE are shown to feed for a longer period of time. Ideally, research should look at such phenotypic traits and relate these back to the biology of FE in the animal. Work in IBERS, Aberystwyth University is doing just this. The project is looking to evaluate existing ways of estimating intake in sheep and relating increasing levels of intake back to the rumen microbiome. Research in FE has so far primarily focused on cattle, and so the study at IBERS is much needed for the sheep industry.

In conclusion, feed Efficiency EBV's are still a little way off being a reality for farmers to base their stock selection on in practice but making selection for FE more attainable at farm level would make it easier to include feed efficiency as a breeding objective in ruminant systems.

Learn new skills in Hedgelaying

From October 2018 Farming Connect is now offering 80% support for completing practical hedgelaying courses.

Hedgerows are an important part of any landscape; they provide boundary definition, shelter, and benefit the wildlife, therefore in order to fulfil this role it is important that they are planted appropriately ensuring they grow strong and survive.

The hedgelaying courses will cover topics on:

- Health and safety
- Tools
- Hedge species and geology
- Demonstration and initial practice
- Demonstration and practice

On completion of the course you will be able to:

- Care for and maintain hedgelaying tools.
- Be aware of the need for correct safety procedures.
- Undertake basic hedgelaying practices suiting the local style.
- Undertake basic hedge maintenance.



The next Application Window for funding opens on Monday the 1st of October for 4 weeks and is the best time of year to apply for the funding for this course as the courses will ideally run between leaf fall (November) and before the bud breaks (March).

To find out more information on this course please speak to one of our Training Providers, contact details for all our providers and information on other courses that Farming Connect support can be found on the website.

You must be registered with Farming Connect and complete a Personal Development Plan before submitting a funding application during an Application Window. More information on the application process can be found on the website <https://businesswales.gov.wales/farmingconnect/face-face-training>

Alternatively contact the Service Centre on 08456 000813 for more information.



Growing trees from seed

Geraint Jones, Forestry Technical Officer, Farming Connect

It is sometimes hard to imagine that trees we see in the Welsh countryside began life as a tiny seed. Historically, landowners would have planted trees grown from seed collected locally. However, many of the trees now planted in Wales each year will have been grown commercially in other parts of the UK or in continental Europe.

The principle that trees grown from local stock, often referred to as local provenance seed, are more likely to be well suited and adapt to local conditions i.e. soil, climate and seasonal patterns is as true today as ever. However, growing awareness of climate change issues has instigated the need to ensure woods and trees are as resilient as possible and able to adapt to changing climatic condition.

The increased threat to our woodlands from pests and diseases and the concern about increasing numbers of new and serious outbreaks is a symptom likely to be exacerbated by climate change. To ensure woods and trees are as resilient as possible to such outbreaks we must broaden the genetic base and diversity of new woodlands by using a wider range of species, and increasing the number of seed sources used. Growing your own trees allows flexibility in choosing provenance whilst seed collections from other areas could provide opportunities for better quality, alternative species or quantity of seed available. With some basic knowledge, a little ingenuity and perseverance most people will be able to grow native trees and shrubs from locally collected seed.

By growing a more diverse range of native trees and shrubs from an identified seed source the farmers and landowners will ensure that the trees planted will be the best suited to local conditions and contribute to a robust and resilient green infrastructure ensuring multiple benefits to the environmental performance of the farm.

For further information on growing trees from seed you can contact: Geraint Jones, Forestry Technical Officer 07398178698 or Geraint.jones@menterabusnes.co.uk





EIPWALES

Cydweithio er ffyniant gwledig
Collaborating for rural success

Investigation of the effect of contrasting dairy production systems in West Wales on the profile of milk fatty acids (especially omega-3 and 6)

The human body isn't capable of producing omega-6 and omega-3 fatty acids. Unfortunately, most of us aren't getting enough omega-3 and tend to have much higher levels of omega-6 in our diets. This imbalance of fatty acids can negatively affect our health. Increasing our omega-3 intake and getting the right balance of the two is found to have multiple health benefits to both our mind and body.

Twenty dairy farmers from South West Wales have come together to investigate whether milk from their production systems contain valuable levels of omega-3. They aim to identify which pasture-based management practices produce the highest levels of the fatty acids. The results could give dairy farmers the opportunity to consider forage-based options as a way of producing milk with enhanced levels of omega-3. This could provide a marketing advantage without going to the extra cost of adding supplements to their forage. The group supply their milk to several different milk buyers and processors. These milk outlets could potentially take advantage of the project results by marketing the products for their high omega-3 content.

In year 1 every farm will provide monthly bulk-tank milk and feed samples for the 24-month project. Samples will be tested for their fatty-acid profile with particular emphasis on omega-3 and omega-6. Forage samples will also be collected from all 20 farms monthly, aligned with every bulk milk sample. Four dairy production systems will be examined, each consisting of five farmers representing each type of production system. These production systems are:

- **Conventional Housed Winter / Grazing Summer**
- **Herds housed all year round**
- **Organic herds**
- **Spring Block Calving**

In year 2 of the project, the same milk sampling and feed sampling process as in year 1 will continue. Additional focus will be given to testing rations where systems are producing higher levels of omega-3 fatty acids to provide further information on the cow nutrition that produces optimum levels.

Tell us about your project idea!

We are still looking for other project ideas. With funding of up to £40,000 available for projects that can run for a maximum of 3 years, EIP Wales is a great opportunity for farmers and forester to put their ideas into practice, test new technologies, products or techniques.

Email eipwales@menterabusnes.co.uk or go to www.gov.wales/farmingconnect for more information.

Putting snails on the menu with the Management Exchange!

Apart from a very occasional heatwave such as the one we've just had, Welsh weather can usually be counted upon to provide the perfect damp, rainy conditions loved by snails. That's a fact most gardeners know to their cost!

But thanks to Farming Connect's Management Exchange programme, beef and sheep farmer Richard Hughes is hoping that his proposal to breed edible outdoor snails on his farm near Pwllheli could lead to a lucrative new stream of income.



Richard who farms at Penfras Uchaf, Llwyndyrys near Pwllheli, has just returned from a Farming Connect Management Exchange visit to Cherasco in Italy, where he attended a course run by internationally renowned snail breeding academy, Istituto Internazionale di Elicicoltura.

"With the uncertainty of Brexit and agricultural grants, we need to consider all kinds of diversification enterprises to safeguard the future of the family farm for future generations," says Richard.

"I had carried out some preliminary research following a family holiday in France when snails, or 'escargot' as they're known there, which are high protein yet low calorie, were on the menu in almost every restaurant and I was reasonably confident that there was an opportunity to create a successful snail enterprise here in Wales, mainly due to our climate."

"One of my next steps will be to apply for nutrient management planning advice which is available through the Farming Connect Advisory Service to sample the soil at the plot now earmarked for the snail enterprise, then fertilising and cleansing the soil to ensure no flies or bugs could affect the new residents." says Richard.

During his visit to Cherasco, Richard and a small group of international students learned how to build an external 'fence' which would prevent other creatures such as mice from disturbing the snails and also keep 'wild' snails out.

"Each pen is split in two, 40% for breeding and 60% for growing/fattening. The edge of the pen is sown with white clover in the first instance, followed by chicory, beets or winter brassicas such as chard with the first sowing taking place in March (40% breeding area) and the remainder in July – it's a diet they like and makes for top quality snails."

Richard says that through the contacts he made in Cherasco, he's already lined up a number of buyers keen for him to get his breeding programme underway since demand currently exceeds supply, but it's not just the snails which have the potential to make money.

The slime from snails is packed with nutrients credited with having anti-aging properties, and with the right equipment it can be collected, stored and sold to make-up manufacturers. Bottled snail eggs can be 'harvested' and sold as snail 'caviar' while the snails themselves can also be sold as food for snakes and other reptiles.

"It was evident that the work in Cherasco creates a visitor market in itself because in addition to attracting tourists and parties of local schoolchildren keen for an out of the ordinary experience, people come from all around the world to learn about farming snails.

"Cherasco and the surrounding area is World famous for the "Slow Food Movement". It has become famous for its specialist produce and I think it would be possible to promote a snail farm to visitors wishing to learn about something fun yet fascinating, and also very different here in Wales."



You can read Richard's report on the Management Exchange pages on the Farming Connect website - www.gov.wales/farmingconnect. If you have a new business idea or want to expand your knowledge of a particular topic by undertaking an exchange with another EU country, contact us today.

The Expression of Interest for the 2019 Management Exchange Program opens on October 1st.

“Start the conversation, it’s good to talk” - Farming Connect campaign helps farm businesses navigate their way through succession planning

In an ideal world, the older generation would discuss their plans for the future of the farm business openly with other members of the family. They would “start the conversation” long before the time when such a discussion becomes essential.

Unfortunately, that is often not the case which has very serious implications for both families and farms in Wales, according to Einir Davies, development and mentoring manager with Menter a Busnes, which delivers Farming Connect on behalf of the Welsh Government.

“The greatest threat to many farm businesses in Wales is lack of a robust succession plan, which is why Farming Connect launched a new succession campaign and are committed to making it the topic of conversation around farm kitchen tables this year,” said Ms Davies.

The new campaign, “Start the Conversation, it’s good to talk” comprises a suite of Farming Connect succession planning support services and guidance tools which will help families navigate their way through what are often challenging and unwelcome discussions.

“Businesses which do not plan ahead risk serious consequences for both family and farm ranging from the falling out of family members and the loss of homes and livelihoods to adverse financial consequences and the impact to all if the family farm has to be sold, carved up or divided.

“Succession planning will address when and how best to pass on the assets to the next generation which includes preparing them for what lies ahead and passing on responsibility too,” said Ms Davies.

Starting point for those wanting to know when and from whom they should seek advice is to obtain a copy of Farming Connect’s succession planning booklet. This straightforward A4 booklet, sets out what support and guidance is available to help families prepare for those all-important discussions which need to take place. It also contains a ‘succession planning toolkit’, providing templates which enable families to discuss and record the facts, opinions and goals of each

family member, saving them valuable time ahead of instructing their own professional experts. Collect a copy from your local development officer or from any agricultural show where Farming Connect has a presence.

The new campaign will signpost farming families towards a team of newly appointed 'succession' mentors who have joined Farming Connect's successful fully-funded mentoring programme. Eligible farmers can now apply for up to 22.5 hours of one-to-one confidential and impartial guidance on 'succession planning' from a mentor who has relevant experience or knowledge. Browse the online mentor directory, which also includes mentors on a wide range of business and technical topics, including 'niche' diversification enterprises and farm safety experts. A filter system will help you identify the mentor with the skills and knowledge you require before applying for the service.

Farming Connect also arranges succession surgeries when eligible farmers can book a fully-funded one-to-one meeting with a specialist rural solicitor.

"You will receive a synopsis of your meeting which you can then discuss with your own professional adviser," said Ms Davies who added that if any families need further assistance with strategic business planning, they can access 80% funding through Farming Connect's Advisory Service.

To learn more about the services available to help you start your conversation, contact your local Farming Connect development officer or visit www.gov.wales/farmingconnect

*"Start the conversation,
it's good to talk"*

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Succession planning
...safeguarding the future of your farm business

#starttheconversation

Useful contacts

Addington
Fund
01926 620 135

Animal and Plant
Health Agency
(APHA)
0300 303 8268

Badger Found
Dead Survey
01970 612374

British Cattle
Movement Service
(BCMS)
0345 050 3456

EID Cymru
01970 636 959

Natural Resources
Wales (NRW)
0300 065 3000

Quality Welsh
Food
Certification Body
01970 636 688

Royal Agricultural
Benevolent
Institution (RABI)
0808 281 9490

Rural Payments
Wales Customer
Contact Centre
0300 062 5004

TB Helpline
0800 496 1439

The Farming
Community
Network (FCN)
03000 111 999

Wales Science
Veterinary Centre
(WSCV)
01970 612 374

Tir Dewi
(Carmarthenshire,
Ceredigion and
Pembrokeshire)
0800 121 4722

Events Timetable

DATE	EVENT	VENUE	CONTACT
08/10/18 19:30 - 21:30	Welsh Government consultation - Brexit and our land.	Stadiwm Liberty Stadium, Abertawe/ Swansea, SA1 2FA	Farming Connect - 08456 000 813
09/10/18 19:30 - 21:00	Eradicating Johne's from your herd	Elephant & Castle, Drenedydd/ Newtown, SY16 2BQ	Gwion Parry - 01248 660373 gwion.parry@menterabusnes.co.uk
09/10/18 19:30 - 21:30	Welsh Government consultation - Brexit and our land.	Ysgol Brynhyfryd, Rhuthun/Ruthin, LL15 1EG	Farming Connect - 08456 000 813
10/10/18 19:30 - 21:30	Welsh Government consultation - Brexit and our land.	Ysgol David Hughes, Porthaethwy/ Menai Bridge, LL59 5SS	Farming Connect - 08456 000 813
10/10/18 19:30 - 21:00	Eradicating Johne's from your herd	The Halfway Inn, Nantgaredig, SA32 7NL	Gwion Parry - 01248 660373 gwion.parry@menterabusnes.co.uk
11/10/18 19:30 - 21:30	Welsh Government consultation - Brexit and our land - Woodland/Forestry themed	Pafiliwn Rhyngwladol/International Pavilion, Maes Y Sioe Frenhinol/Royal Welsh Showground, LD2 3SY	Farming Connect - 08456 000 813
23/10/18 13:00 - 16:00	Be safe when working in farm woodlands	Bryn Isa, Llanefydd, LL16 5EU	Geraint Jones - 07398178698 geraint.jones@menterabusnes.co.uk
24/10/18 11:00-13:00	From Calf to Calving	Coleg Lllyfasi, Rhuthun/Ruthin. LL15 2LB	Rhys Davies - 07985379880 rhys.davies@menterabusnes.co.uk
24/10/18 13:00 - 16:00	Saving lives and livelihoods	IBERS, Gogerddan, Aberystwyth, SY23 3EE	Farming Connect - 08456 000 813
25/10/18 13:00 - 16:00	Saving lives and livelihoods	Great Tre-rhew Farm, Llanwytherin/ Llanvetherine, NP7 8RA	Farming Connect - 08456 000 813
29/10/18 14:00 - 16:00	Fodder beet: Maximising productivity from growing to grazing	Trefnant Hall, Berriew, Y Trallwng/ Welshpool, Powys, SY21 8AS	Lisa Roberts - 07399 849 148 lisa.roberts@menterabusnes.co.uk
31/10/18 11:00-14:30	Heating efficiencies when kiln drying fuelwood	Fan Farm, Myddfai, Llandoverly, SA20 0QB	Geraint Jones - 07398178698 geraint.jones@menterabusnes.co.uk
01/11/18 19:30 - 21:30	Cattle Lameness	Clwb Rygbi Nant Conwy, Llanrwst , Conwy, LL26 0PW	Gwion Parry - 01248 660373 gwion.parry@menterabusnes.co.uk
05/11/18 19:30 - 21:30	Cattle Lameness	The Crooked Horn, Holywell , Flintshire, CH8 8AX	Gwion Parry - 01248 660373 gwion.parry@menterabusnes.co.uk
07/11/18 13:30 - 15:30	Getting to grips with soil fertility	Llysun, Llanerfyl, Y Trallwng/ Welshpool, SY21 0EL	Lisa Roberts - 07399 849 148 lisa.roberts@menterabusnes.co.uk
07/11/18 11:00-14:30	Managing hedgerows for biomass material	Plas Y Cerdin, Llangynin, SA33 4LE	Geraint Jones - 07398178698 geraint.jones@menterabusnes.co.uk
08/11/18 19:30 - 21:30	Cattle Lameness	Knighton Community Centre, Knighton , Powys, LD7 1DR	Gwion Parry - 01248 660373 gwion.parry@menterabusnes.co.uk
13/11/18 19:30 - 21:30	Cattle Lameness	St Mary's Golf Club, St Mary's Hill, , Pencoed, Bridgend, CF35 5EA	Gwion Parry - 01248 660373 gwion.parry@menterabusnes.co.uk
14/11/18 19:30 - 21:30	Cattle Lameness	Newcastle Emlyn RFC , Newcastle Emlyn , Carmarthenshire, SA38 9AZ	Gwion Parry - 01248 660373 gwion.parry@menterabusnes.co.uk
14/11/18 19:00 - 21:00	Benefits of trees in free range egg production units	Rhug Estate, Corwen, LL21 0EH	Geraint Jones - 07398178698 geraint.jones@menterabusnes.co.uk
15/11/18 13:30 - 16:00	Moving towards future proofing the beef enterprise at Newton Farm	Newtown Farm, Scethrog, Aberhonddu/Brecon, LD3 7YG	Menna Williams-07399600146 menna.williams@menterabusnes.co.uk
20/11/18 19:30 - 21:30	Cattle Lameness	Haverfordwest RFC, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA61 1LY	Gwion Parry - 01248 660373 gwion.parry@menterabusnes.co.uk