

WINTER 2022

RUMINANT NEWS

AT THE HEART OF THE BEEF & LAMB INDUSTRY

Feeding in-calf
beef heifers

Optimising ewe
nutrition

A large flock of sheep is gathered in a grassy field, moving along a dirt path. The sheep are of various breeds, including some with thick wool and others that are leaner. In the background, there are trees and a wooden fence. The overall scene is a typical rural farm setting.

Future plans for the
BEEF & LAMB SECTOR

Five-year sector plan launch

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AHDB is a statutory levy board, funded by farmers, growers and others in the supply chain. We equip the industry with easy to use, practical know-how which they can apply straight away to make better decisions and improve their performance. For further information, please visit ahdb.org.uk

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WELCOME

Samantha Charlton,
Head of Engagement – Beef & Lamb



In this issue, we're pleased to unveil our new sector plan, developed as a result of your feedback during our Shape the Future vote. You can find out more about that and our sector council on pages 4–7.

We're tickling your tastebuds on pages 8–9 with a behind-the-scenes look at the work our Food Communications Manager does to make our marketing campaigns, such as our current We Eat Balanced campaign, successful and appealing to consumers.

Strategic Farmer, Steven Lawson, aims to reduce costs and fertiliser use by concentrating on his soil and grassland. Read about how he's doing it with the help of Dr Liz Genever on pages 12–13.

On pages 14–15 you'll find out more about our work in encouraging the French consumer to enjoy our products. France is our largest export market for lamb.

As part of our Maternal Matters campaign, we get advice on how you can get winter feeding right for in-calf heifers, see pages 20–21.

There's a chance to find out more about your local knowledge exchange manager on pages 26–27. Plus there are other helpful articles in this issue for you to enjoy.

As always, remember to update your contact details and sign up for the great events and webinars we have lined up for you. All the details are on the back page.



Recent activities from **THE BEEF & LAMB TEAM**

The past six months have been non-stop for the Beef & Lamb team at AHDB. Through the prolonged dry summer, the financial crisis and reputational challenges, the team have been working hard to deliver support for levy payers. Here's an overview of the of some of the accomplishments.

Last month we saw British lamb exported to the US for the first time in more than two decades. Dunbia exported the first consignment from its site in Carmarthenshire, Wales.

It follows moves by US authorities to amend the small ruminant rule, which prevented the export of lamb from the UK and other countries for more than 20 years. Trade with the US is estimated by us to be worth £37 million to the sheep sector in the first five years of trade.

The US is proving a valuable market for red meat exports, with shipments of pork and beef worth more than £24 million in the first seven months of 2022.

According to HMRC, 930 tonnes of beef were exported to the US between January and July, up 57% on the previous year. You can find out more about our exports worldwide and a focus on our activity in France on pages 14 and 15.

We know that this has been a tough summer for many of you, being the driest for decades, and that winter feed may be an issue. At a recent event we held, one of our Strategic Farmers, Chris Elkington, shared his tips on how he is coping with drier weather.

This included integrating herbal leys and using a rotational grazing system, soil testing, planning feed availability throughout the year, de-stocking where possible and breeding smaller lambs. You can find out more from Chris and other farmers on dealing with dry weather on the AHDB podcast channel.

We've recently published a blog from our Technical Manager Steve Powdrill, which looks at how the lack of grass will affect finishing the lamb crop and some actions that can be taken. This includes outwintering finishing stock, accepting they will not meet target specification, and buying in additional feed. There's much more information about all of this on our website with links to resources from his blog "How will the lack of grass affect how you finish your animals?"

The way we work at AHDB has changed and, following your feedback in the Shape the Future vote, we have now published our plans for Beef & Lamb moving forward. We look forward to working more closely with you on the things you said matter most to you. You will find out more about the plan and our Beef & Lamb Sector Council on the next few pages.



About AHDB's Beef & Lamb SECTOR COUNCIL

The way we operate is changing, with the sector councils becoming the voice of levy payers and shaping the work of AHDB. Beef & Lamb Sector Council Chair, Colin Bateman, explains more.



I farm around 900 acres in the hills of South Cumbria. The farm business includes 1,000 lambing ewes, a few suckler cows, a dairy beef enterprise, and various diversifications. While I sit on the main board of AHDB as Chair of the Beef & Lamb Sector Council, I'm also a levy payer.

The sector councils have replaced the previous sector boards. We are the voice of levy payers within AHDB and will guide and steer everything it does. Importantly the sector council makes the funding decisions about the work carried out on your behalf.

Each council member has been through a rigorous recruitment process. Their applications were scrutinised to make sure they met the strict job criteria. At interview, they had to prove that their skills and competencies will provide the best outcome for levy payers. Interviews were carried out by a panel of sector and independent representatives.

Through our Shape the Future vote, council members have been ratified by you. Each member will serve for a term of three years, with a maximum of two terms. At the start of each term, we will ask levy payers to reappoint them to the council. The same goes for when any role becomes vacant; any candidate who doesn't receive majority support will not be appointed.

Many of the people put forward for appointment are levy payers themselves but some have been put forward because of the diverse mix of skills and experience they bring from other parts of the industry.

Following the Shape the Future vote, where we asked you what you want AHDB to deliver for the industry, the sector council has carefully considered your responses to shape our plan for the next five years. You'll find out more about that on the following pages.

But who are the sector council? There are 11 of us, including me as the Chair. On the Beef & Lamb Council, we currently have six producers, three processors, an auctioneer and an independent representative. It's important to have a broad range of skills to provide challenge and ensure value for the levy payer's investment.

Sector Council members

The producers are Anne-Marie Hamilton (sheep), James Taylor (mixed farm), James Shouler (mixed farm), Bryan Griffiths (beef and sheep), George Fell (mixed farm). The processors are Laurie Ibbotson (Commercial Director for Dovecote Park), Steve Thompson (Business Unit Director for ABP) and Dr Ghulam Khan (Gama) (halal and ethnic food service expert working for Shazan Foods Ltd).

Robert Venner is a partner with the auctioneers Greenslade Taylor Hunt, a member of the Livestock Auctioneers Association. Dr Paul Unwin is the independent member with a business background, who, with his wife, runs pedigree flocks of Welsh Mountain sheep in the south Shropshire hills.

We'll be introducing you more to your sector council members in the next few editions of Ruminant News, or you can find out more about them now on the Beef & Lamb Sector Council page on our website.

Regional Field Team

In addition to our council members, you also have the benefit of a specialist Beef & Lamb Engagement team, which works very closely with the council to make sure your views are represented and AHDB's work is delivered directly to you.

Our field-based Knowledge Exchange Managers work alongside you, industry experts and key stakeholders. Their specific talents, insights and enthusiasm to work across the industry will provide the essential connections between our organisation and others with whom we need to collaborate to achieve our aims. As a pivotal point of contact and by using various methods of engagement, the team can share insights and evidence that is not available anywhere else in the industry. You can find out more about them on page 26.

Who's who in your sector council 2022



Colin Bateman

Sheep and beef farmer,
Beef & Lamb Sector Council
Chair, Cumbria



George Fell

Mixed farm,
Yorkshire



Bryan Griffiths

Beef and sheep farmer,
North Devon



**Anne Marie
Hamilton**

Lecturer, sheep farmer,
Bedfordshire



Laurie Ibbotson

Processor, Commercial
director for Dovecote Park



Ghulam Khan

Processor, Halal and
ethnic food expert,
Shazan Foods Ltd



James Shouler

Mixed farm,
Oxfordshire



James Taylor

Sheep and beef farmer,
Oxfordshire



**Steve
Thompson**

Processor, Business Unit
Director ABP



Dr Paul Unwin

Independent, Innovation
consultant, Pedigree sheep
producer, Shropshire



Robert Venner

Auctioneer, Partner with
Greenslade Taylor Hunt

AHDB Beef & Lamb's FIVE-YEAR SECTOR PLAN

In May, we asked you for feedback on the work delivered by AHDB. The message back from you was that the levy should be used to support the reputation of red meat, and all other work should feed into that goal. Explaining how the five-year sector plan was put together is AHDB Beef & Lamb's Sector Council Chair, Colin Bateman.

Following the Shape the Future consultation earlier this year, we listened carefully to your comments and feedback. We considered those alongside the available budget, the immediate and longer-term opportunities, and the challenges for the sector.

As a result of the feedback and the decisions of the sector council, we have asked AHDB to focus on marketing, exports, and insight and evidence – which feed into reputation.

Like many organisations AHDB faces financial constraints, meaning that we have had to make some hard choices on where we put your levy funds. The levy rate has stayed the same for over a decade, but inflation and changes in AHDB's VAT status (meaning that we can no longer re-claim it) have all combined to reduce the available levy funds (from £15.4m this financial year to a projected £14.2m in 2023–24). There is no current plan to increase levy rates, but the sector council will seek your views about where levy rates should head in the longer term.

How does this breakdown?

The most striking feature of this plan is that all work will be expected to protect or promote the reputation of the sector, either directly or indirectly.

The sector council has directed AHDB to:

- Educate consumers of the future by working with the British Nutrition Foundation, supporting Open Farm Sundays, providing teaching materials for schools, and supporting Healthy Eating Week
- Promote the image of red meat in the media by stressing the benefits of eating beef and lamb and challenging misinformation
- Bring the industry together to tackle reputational issues
- Provide expert spokespeople, case studies and the facts for the media
- Actively seek opportunities to promote the positive work of the industry
- Respond to government consultations and address Select Committees
- Inform policy development to ensure beef and lamb remain a key part of the Government's Eatwell Guide
- Remain alert to emerging reputational issues and policy direction

Marketing

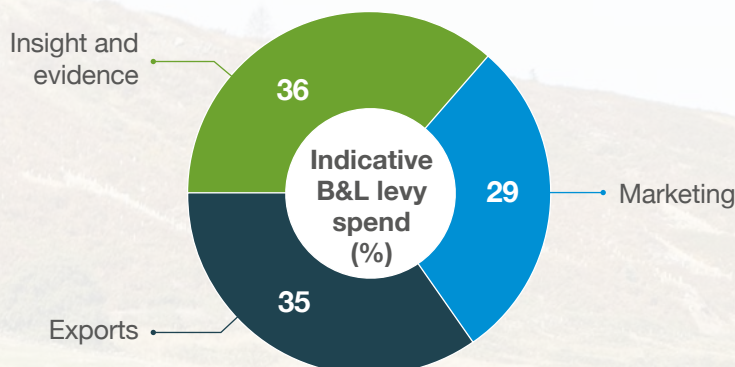
Our marketing work will aim to protect the long-term demand by championing beef and lamb as an excellent choice for consumers. The sector council has directed AHDB to:

- Continue the We Eat Balanced campaign
- Deliver other highly visible targeted marketing campaigns across national TV, online, social and press
- Showcase our world-class farming standards to consumers
- Work with retailers to improve the shopping experience in the meat aisle

Exports

The more beef and lamb we can sell around the world, the better chance we have of getting the best value for the whole carcass and so support farmgate prices. The sector council has directed AHDB to:

- Continue to open new markets by collaborating with government and industry to realise new sales opportunities
- Champion beef and lamb at international trade shows



- Host foreign buyers and governments seeking to approve and facilitate increases in access and trade
- Work with exporters to enable them to visit target markets and increase trade
- Support exports of beef and lamb in established markets by working closely with exporters

Insight and evidence

It's only possible to protect and promote the reputation of beef and lamb and the industry if there are excellent practices on-farm and evidence of those is gathered. However, farmers can only employ the best techniques if they are aware of them, and they are profitable enough to adopt. AHDB provides independent insight and evidence to support farmers and, in turn, the reputation of the industry.

AHDB will work in the following areas:

Animal health and welfare

- Collect data to underpin the reputation of beef and lamb. For example, the use of antibiotics in the sector via AHDB's Medicine Hub
- Work with others to prevent or minimise the effect of any diseases (such as BVD and TB), which can affect the physical and economic performance of the herd, and the reputation of the sector
- Work with Defra to develop the Animal Health and Welfare Pathway

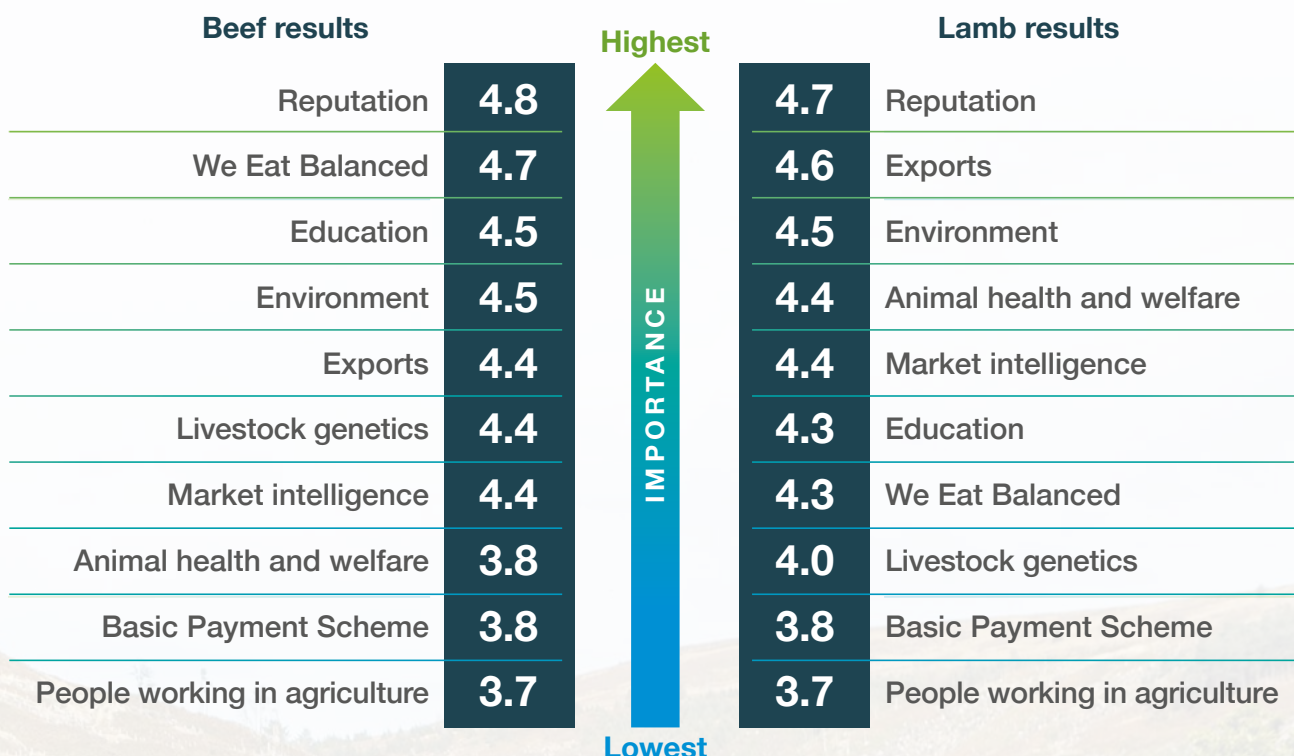
Environment

- Make sense of the existing data and evidence and use it to help levy payers navigate changes to environmental policy
- Provide the best practical advice on techniques that will boost profits and minimise environmental impact
- Develop a road map with the industry to benchmark the impact of beef and lamb production on the environment, and provide proof of continuous improvement
- Work with the industry to develop standard approaches and metrics where they are most needed
- Commission an independent review of the role genetics can play in reaching net zero, and consider how this can be optimised and funded

Market intelligence

- Supply price information
- Analyse cost of production and farm margins, including international comparisons
- Follow consumption trends that could impact on demand levels and standards of production
- Monitor emerging longer-term market signals that will impact on profits and the ability to compete at home or overseas
- Provide 24/7 access to all this information

For regular updates, online and at events, register now to stay in touch at ahdb.org.uk/keeping-in-touch



Scale: 5 high (important) – 1 low (less important)

Eating a healthy balanced diet starts at home



Behind AHDB's multimillion-pound marketing campaigns are some delicious recipes, which will inspire consumers and get those taste buds tingling. Meet the lady behind the magic, AHDB's Food Communications Manager, Denise Spencer-Walker.

Throughout history, food has played a pivotal role in society – not only to sustain human life but as a way of life, a choice, and freedom of expression. UK consumers demand a choice of diverse cuisines from across the globe and there are now more takeaway and fast-food options available than ever before.

Our Food Communications Manager, Denise Spencer-Walker, plays an integral part in selecting, preparing, and creatively designing recipes to inspire consumers to include red meat and dairy products in their diet and to bring the fun back into cooking at home.

A bit of background

Working in the Market Development department for 18 years, Denise's role involves working on food marketing projects relating to a specific marketing brief. This includes recipe development and recipe writing, market research, testing, production of recipe videos and still photography to provide food expertise across multiple channels.

The work also involves recipe demonstrations to external audiences and providing specialist food input into social media channels. The recipes are specially designed, crafted, and double-tested, based on our market insight reports and food trends, in a bespoke test kitchen.

Denise says: "We live in a digital world in which social media creates a desire to compete with one another on who can post the most attractive and engaging content. It's purely judged by appearance and ultimately how well it fits within their lifestyle."

The role of recipe development

Qualified in Culinary Arts and Food Hygiene, Denise has over 30 years of experience working in food, specialising in the red meat sector. Denise has worked on a variety of campaigns for AHDB, including our Midweek Meal with Pork campaign, alongside other sector campaigns like Thin Cuts Steak, Make it Lamb, and Love Lamb. Her role is fundamental in developing recipes that promote specific cuts of meat, creating consumer demand for those products with delicious, inspiring food. Denise explores how to create practical, easy-to-follow and affordable recipes to persuade the consumer to do more home cooking incorporating red meat and dairy products.

Denise says: "We work closely with the British Nutrition Foundation (BNF) and other organisations to ensure the recipes meet the criteria of a nutritional and balanced diet. This is a core part of our marketing campaigns, to provide consumers with the correct information on food, farming and nutrition."

Recipes

Quick Beef Stroganoff

This classic beef stroganoff is super quick as it uses beef stir-fry strips, onions, mustard, mushrooms, stock and crème fraîche. A great midweek option served with chips.

Prep time: 20 mins
Cook time: 25 mins
Serves: 4

simplybeefandlamb.co.uk/recipes/quick-beef-stroganoff



Spiced Shredded Lamb

A slow-cooked whole shoulder of lamb combined with a jar of prepared curry paste, tomato puree, chopped tomatoes, stock and chickpeas then cooked until meltingly tender and 'pulled' until the meat falls away from the bone. A perfect platter for a lamb adventure and sharing.

Prep time: 10 mins
Cook time: 4 hours
Serves: 8

simplybeefandlamb.co.uk/recipes/spiced-shredded-lamb



For further information, contact:

Denise Spencer-Walker

Food Communications Manager

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WE EAT BALANCED

Our consumer campaign We Eat Balanced has re-launched this autumn to help protect long-term consumer attitudes to British meat and dairy as part of a healthy and sustainable diet. Activity can be seen across ITV, Channel 4, Sky's catch-up TV, YouTube, social media, the Guardian and the i newspapers, as well as being promoted in the major supermarkets.

We'll shine a spotlight on the positive food choices that consumers can make by focusing on three key messages:

- Meat and dairy are sources of Vitamin B12, which is not naturally present in plant-based foods
- The UK has world-class production standards
- Red meat and dairy from Britain are amongst the most sustainable in the world

Visit the We Eat Balanced website to learn more ahdb.org.uk/WeEatBalanced



TIME TO GET ON BOARD WITH MEDICINE HUB

Developed by AHDB, the Medicine Hub is an industry-wide initiative that gathers antibiotic use data from cattle and sheep enterprises in the UK. Charlotte Grime explains more.



“Producers in the UK adhere to some of the most rigorous and robust production standards around, and work hard to achieve high levels of health and welfare as well as low antibiotic use, something the industry is rightly proud of,” says vet Mandy Nevel, Head of Animal Health and Welfare at AHDB, who has been instrumental in the development of Medicine Hub.

“Even though individual farms must record medicine use, until now there has been no central online resource for doing so at a national level, something that is set to change with Medicine Hub. And it’s worth noting that, even if you have used no antibiotics in the last calendar year, this information is important to capture,” she adds.

Vets, together with farmers, set ambitious targets for antibiotic use that have been adopted by the RUMA (Responsible Use of Antibiotics in Agriculture alliance) Targets Task Force.

“Of course, antibiotics have a role in managing the health of animals and should be used appropriately. We need to understand what is being used and what rate and in which categories of animal. Medicine Hub will provide this facility,” Mandy Nevel explains.

Mandy Nevel adds: “We are often asked by farmers about the data – who gets to see it, where is it shared and so on. Data always belongs to the farmer. The farmer can choose to give permission to the vet or any other holder of data to upload it on their behalf. At all times, the farmer remains in complete control of who can and cannot see their data. Medicine Hub will only publish anonymised data.”

Medicine use data is often transferred on to Medicine Hub via the vet practice’s computer records or by a bulk data holder once the appropriate permissions have been granted. A bulk data holder could be a third party that an assurance scheme or supply chain works with.

Mark Jelley

Mark Jelley is a beef farmer in Northamptonshire with a 95-cow suckler herd, finishing all calves on the 500-acre mixed farm. He works with NFU and AHDB and is Chair of the Cattle Antibiotic Guardian Group.

“We set up an account in conjunction with my vet practice, Towcester Farm Vets and, to be fair, it was all fairly minimal effort from our side,” he says.

“It is possible for farmers to register on the Hub and upload data but it is easier to get your vet practice, or other bulk data holder with whom your farm business shares medicine data, to do this for you,” adds Mark.



As a Red Tractor farm, Mark and his vet were already looking at antibiotic data, but the Hub presents it in a more user-friendly way. The reports that can be generated are able to highlight areas in need of attention. For example, records showed that a lot of antibiotics were being used for calves with navel infections due to inadequate pen hygiene. Changes to pen management and hygiene protocols have now been implemented.

Bryan and Liz Griffiths



Bryan and Liz Griffiths farm just over 300 acres in North Devon with a flock of 850 Mule and Suffolk crosses alongside 30 finishing cattle. Bryan, a former chairman and now Vice President of the National Sheep Association (NSA), also sits on the AHDB Beef & Lamb Sector Council.

“Producers work hard to achieve high levels of health and welfare as well as responsible antibiotic use, but until now, there has been no central resource for building a picture of antibiotic use at a national level,” Bryan says.

“Of course, we do get some disease, who doesn’t? And we treat as and when needed,” Bryan explains. “Like many sheep producers, our main issues are around lameness especially contagious ovine digital dermatitis (CODD), and occasional pink eye, but we adhere to the principle of ‘as much necessary but as little as possible’.”

“This ongoing development of Medicine Hub will aid the defence of the livestock sector’s reputation and help protect antibiotics for human use in the future,” adds Bryan.

Interested?

For more information, go to medicinehub.org.uk There is also information there explaining how to start and what to do if you want your vet, software provider or other data holder to share data on your behalf. Further support is available at medicinehub@ahdb.org.uk (Tel: 02477 719 414).

For further information, contact:

Charlotte Grime

Communications Manager for Medicine Hub
charlotte.grime@ahdb.org.uk

MEDICINE + HUB

- For dairy, beef and sheep farms
- Collates, reports and compares antibiotic data
- Safe, secure and independent
- Data owned and controlled by the farmer



Monitoring antibiotic use is everyone’s interest. It safeguards the reputation of the industry and demonstrates responsible use. Others are sharing data; isn’t it time you registered with Medicine Hub?

medicinehub.org.uk



A recent AHDB pull up banner for the Medicine Hub Initiative

Strategic thinking ABOUT GRASS



Steven Lawson, AHDB Beef & Lamb Strategic Farmer from Northumberland, has made soils and grass a key focus in his expansion plans by utilising the support offered by AHDB, including working with independent sheep and beef consultant, Dr Liz Genever.

In early 2021, Steven extended the farm from 118 ha to just over 300 ha of mixed ground by renting in the next-door block. During 2021, he bought in more ewes to deal with the expansion and started to contract graze some cattle in the summer. He also grows around 8 ha of forage crops every year to outwinter cows.



One of Steven's aims is to reduce feed costs for the ewes and cows by reducing the amount of silage he needs to make to feed them, and to use less bought-in feed around lambing. He also wants to reduce fertiliser use, along with most farmers. All of these are linked to developing grazing systems that are suitable to his land and ensuring there is enough grass at key times of the year.

Steven, in conjunction with his consultant, Dr Liz Genever, is using Farmax to help him plan the year. Farmax is a New Zealand-based software system that helps farmers and their consultant monitor and plan the pasture system throughout the year. It uses information about the number, weight and stage of production of the animals on the farm, the amount of pasture, and any supplements or forage crops.

Steve is regularly measuring grass using a compressed sward stick and this information is loaded into Farmax

alongside information about any livestock purchases, sales and deaths, plus any changes to land availability – e.g. a field being re-seeded or set aside for forage crops or shut up for silage.

The graph opposite is Steven's Farmax file for the last 12 months with the thin dark blue line being the average pasture cover across the farm in kg DM per hectare, the red dots being the measurements, the light blue line being the minimal cover and the thick green block being the target range.

When systems are moving towards high levels of pasture in the diet, we need to start planning in the late summer/early autumn to make sure we hit a certain target for pasture cover on 1 October. Generally, after 1 October pasture cover only starts going up when we get into spring (see line above). This means the average pasture cover needs to be high enough to meet all the winter requirements for the stock and leave enough grass to set up lambing paddocks.

For example, last October the average pasture cover was 2,500 kg DM, which was higher than the target range, and it was monitored to make sure quality was adequate for tupping time. However, Steven had an outbreak of sheep scab in his flock in autumn 2021 and the treatment meant that he couldn't sell any lambs. This meant that they were on the farm for longer and pasture cover reduced going into the winter, so by February it was lower than ideal.

At the time, Farmax was predicting that a small dose of nitrogen in the spring would help significantly but this was not available as Steven was prioritising the small amount on the farm to silage ground.

He decided to use a sacrifice-field approach with the sheep and put them on a field that was destined for a re-seed. He fed them on bales, fodder beet and some sheep nuts when they were close to lambing.

Most of the farm was being rested and once they were lambed, they were moved onto the rested fields. The grass growth was good in April and May, the pasture cover figures returned to target and continue to be acceptable even with changeable weather during the spring and early summer.

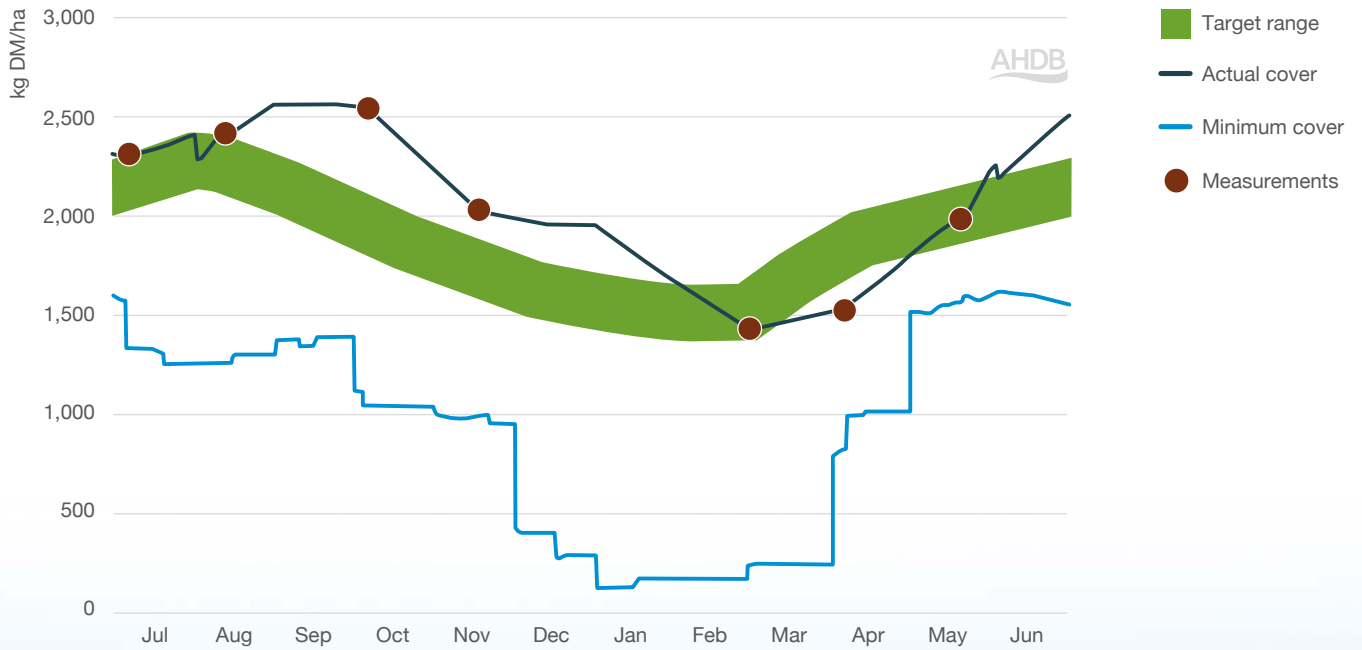
If the lambs had been sold, Steven would have deferred grass for the ewes to graze on in small paddocks on daily shifts as he had done the previous year. This will be the plan for the winter of 2022/2023.

He is developing a rearing block and finishing block idea. The newly rented land needs more work on soil fertility and grass quality. It will be classed as the 'rearing block' and will be used to hold his breeding ewes through the winter on deferred grass or in-situ grazing of fodder beet. His owned land is more suitable for finishing animals due to higher soil fertility and a history of reseeded. The lambs and any replacement ewes will be moved to the finishing block at weaning and only return to the rearing block as breeding ewes.

To reduce inputs on farm, we need to think more strategically and tools like Farmax can help to test out ideas and develop new approaches.

For further information, contact:

Dr Liz Genever
Independent sheep and beef consultant
brp@ahdb.org.uk



Pasture cover for Steven Lawson's farm



PROMOTING EXPORTS OVERSEAS



While we continue opening new markets further afield, our work closer to home carries on with our European neighbours. Lucille Brillaud shares the work they are doing in France to promote quality beef and lamb from Britain.



Even after our departure from the European Union, France is still a hugely important market for our meat products. UK sheep meat exports have recovered, totalling 37,400 tonnes in the first half of 2022, up 23% on the exceptionally low level recorded in 2021. For sheep meat we are the largest exporter to France, commanding a 22% share of consumption of lamb in the country.

To ensure that our products are easily identifiable, they are all sold in supermarkets under the St George brand, giving a unique identity to our lamb since 2003. We work with importers and provide them with labels for their meat trays, producing about 1.5 million labels yearly for St George and sending them to importers as requested.

It is important to understand the qualities the French consumer is after. They value the idea of grass-fed animals and find the UK animal welfare standards reassuring. Flavour is key as well.

But the product needs a little extra help, in a country where they look at buying local first and consumption of lamb is falling year-on-year. We have a team in France made up of Severine Roberts for administration and events, Carole Rivière for in-store marketing, and me for digital communications. We work closely with head butchers in about 50 stores from the main supermarket chains. By building up these relationships, we are then able to carry out promotional activity in stores.

This activity includes animations and tastings. In September, for example, we had the equivalent of 250 days of in-store animations in 32 supermarkets and hypermarkets. The team uses digital marketing on Facebook and Instagram to target shoppers within a 10 km radius of the supermarket to let them know about promotional activity in their local store.

We use these in-store opportunities to showcase the flavour of lamb from the UK and the versatility of the meat, along with recipe inspiration.

When we do the animations, we ask the person in charge of the tasting to report back to us on customer reactions and feedback. Thanks to our in-store promotions, head butchers in supermarkets sell 15% to 20% more lamb than during periods where there is no promotional activity.

Once a year our Top Pro event is held with 50 to 60 head butchers from supermarkets across France. As these are the key people who see a lot of the carcasses under the St George label, this is an opportunity to come together and share new ideas. We use the day to present any new innovations, see what they need (as they are the ones speaking to French consumers daily), showcase new recipes and continue to build the relationship, which allows us to continue to market your product.

Our work will continue with this important market. But at the end of the day, it's the quality of your work in producing good quality animals that allows us to do great marketing. We are selling a really great product.



Red meat exports reach record level

More widely, red meat exports from the UK surpassed pre-pandemic levels in the first half of 2022, with the value of shipments worth £858 million.

The latest figures from HMRC show that from January to June, almost 314,000 tonnes of beef, lamb and pork were shipped to export markets around the world – up from 268,543 tonnes during the same period last year.

Prior to lockdown, exports of red meat reached £726 million in the first six months of 2019's 'record' year, representing a 9% increase on 2018 figures. However, in the first six months of 2021, exports of red meat dropped in value to £673 million, due to the impact of Brexit and Covid-19.

This year, beef exports, including offal, rose by 73.6% in value year-on-year to reach £319 million – the majority of which was sent to the EU. Lamb exports were worth more than £245 million – with both volumes and value up 22.9% and 32.5% respectively, and with the lion's share shipped to the EU.

For further information, contact:

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The role of CT technology IN MAKING BREEDING DECISIONS



Utilising technology to make informed breeding decisions can increase carcase yield and the profitability of sheep enterprises. Laura Eyles, Senior Signet Breeding Specialist, explains how CT scanning is used within our sheep industry.

Computed Tomography (CT) scanning is a great tool for identifying superior genetics within terminal sire flocks and can assist the marketing of recorded rams.

CT is a welfare-friendly way of assessing the total muscle, fat, and bone yield in a live sheep. The medical imaging technology produces pictures of the body using low dose X-rays. CT allows a near perfect prediction of carcase composition and muscle yield, and it can also be used to measure muscling in different parts of the carcase, such as the rib, loin and gigot.

Since CT scanning services were launched in the late 1990s through levy-funded research, this world-leading technology has allowed more than 13,500 lambs from 21 different breeds to be scanned, with their data analysed within Signet's monthly evaluations. This service enables ram breeders to select breeding lines with superior yields of meat at a given liveweight, whilst providing additional measurements from the loin and gigot.

Furthermore, the use of CT has increased our understanding of the relationship between on-farm ultrasonic measurements of muscle and fat depth and the amount of lean and fat in the carcase. This has increased the value of on-farm ultrasound and strengthened Signet's breeding evaluations. Incorporating CT data into the evaluation of a flock enhances the accuracy of estimated breeding values (EBVs) for growth and carcase traits, with EBVs and indexes increasing if the data demonstrates that an individual animal or family are genetically superior. This allows breeders and buyers alike to have greater confidence in an animal's breeding values.

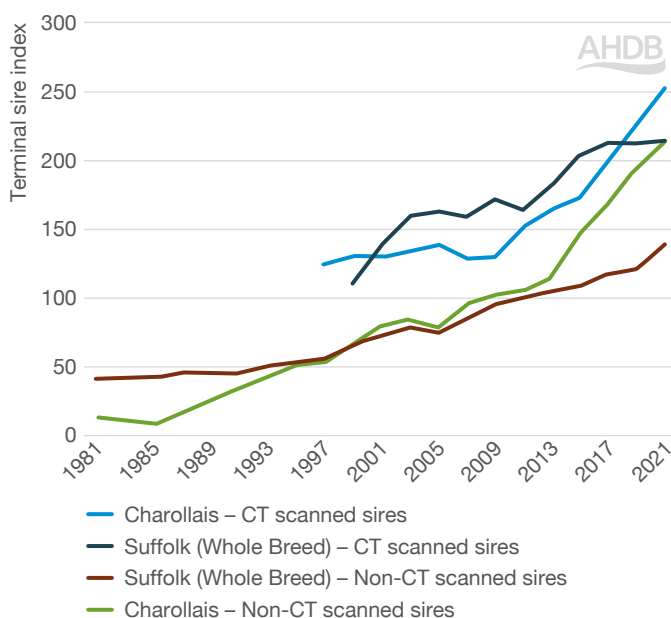
Breeding for gigot shape and conformation

Breeders using CT technology also have EBVs that help them identify sheep that have better muscularity of the hind leg or gigot. The production of a Gigot Muscularity EBV was made possible following levy-funded research at SRUC to develop a muscularity measure that identifies sheep with wide gigots. Work within the RamCompare project has shown that rams with high EBVs for this trait are leaving lambs with superior carcase conformation.

Using CT to enhance ease of lambing

Recent research suggests that CT measurements of the hip, shoulder and pelvis can be used as a proxy for assessing ease

of birth. This work highlights future opportunities for the CT unit in producing EBVs that can also improve animal welfare.



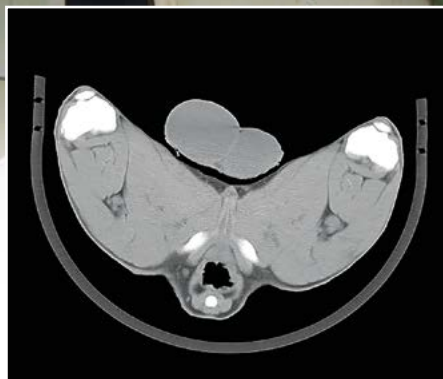
Genetic Trends for lambs by CT and non-CT scanned sires

Who benefits from this work?

CT scanning is available to all UK sheep breeders. Around a quarter of Charollais and Hampshire Down lambs and the vast majority of Meatlinc rams have been sired by a CT-scanned ram – with Meatlinc breeders quick to integrate CT data into their breeding programme.

Utilisation of these CT-scanned sires for breeding purposes has increased in recent years with more breeders selecting CT-scanned stock. As a result, rates of genetic gain for growth and carcase traits are significantly higher in flocks using CT-scanned rams. At a flock level, the use of CT is helping to maximise returns within both pedigree and commercial flocks.

This work provides wider benefits throughout the supply chain. Processors and retailers can secure lambs that more closely meet their specifications and provide greater consistency. Consumers benefit from lamb with better eating quality and less plate waste that is capable of being produced at lower cost.



How to access this service

Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) run a mobile CT unit. This provides breeders around the country with easy access to this service. Dates and locations are published yearly so keep your eyes peeled or contact the team at CTUnit@sruc.ac.uk directly.

The cost varies depending on whether breeders use the static CT scanner at Edinburgh or the mobile service, but CT typically costs between £70–£100/animal. However, levy support is often available from AHDB, HCC and QMS.

While the service is expensive for individual breeders, the benefits to the wider industry are fundamental and that is why AHDB has been so keen to support its use over the last two decades.

For further information, contact:

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Signet 
BREEDING SERVICES

New EBVs to improve maternal EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY

Many suckler farmers are investigating ways to improve the efficiency of their cattle enterprises. Could AHDB's new maternal trait breed evaluations be the answer? Dr Alex Brown, AHDB's Senior Beef Breeding and Genetics Manager, explains these new EBVs.

In the past, much of the interest in improving efficiencies has been focused on terminal traits including growth rate and carcass quality. However, with 70% of the cost from suckler beef production, plus emission levels, originating from the suckler cow, farmers are starting to turn their attention to maternal efficiency.

For the past year, AHDB has been working to promote the production of heifers that are efficient, profitable and fit for the future under the Maternal Matters campaign. Alongside appropriate management and nutrition, choosing the right genetics for breeding heifer replacements is a key long-term investment, as the benefits are cumulative and permanent.

In 2018, AHDB launched their National Beef Evaluations providing estimated breeding values (EBVs) for five commercial carcass traits in beef cattle, using national data from processors, breed societies and the British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS).

Thanks to further research and analysis in conjunction with Scotland's Rural College, it has been possible to leverage further value from routinely recorded BCMS data and release three new maternal EBVs through the National Beef Evaluation database.



These are:

- Age at first calving
- Productive lifespan
- Calf survival

Understanding the new maternal trait EBVs

This set of EBVs is derived directly from commercial data and should therefore be of high interest to commercial producers as well as the pedigree sector. As well as being useful when making your own breeding decisions, these EBVs could also be used as a marketing tool when selling stock bulls. These new EBVs provide an opportunity to have a cumulative and permanent impact on suckler herd performance by improving your herd genetics, and they link tightly to key maternal performance indicators (KPIs).



Age at first calving

Definition: An EBV predicting the age at which a heifer has her first calf. Selecting for this EBV will produce animals more likely to hold service at a younger age.

Calculated from: Birth and calving dates from BCMS

Unit of measurement: Days

Interpretation: Wedderlie Ebsolvent has an age at first calving EBV of 24.25 days. On average, he will produce progeny who calve 12 days earlier than progeny from a bull with an age at first calving EBV of 0.

KPI: Age at first calving

Productive lifespan

Definition: An EBV predicting how long females will stay in the breeding herd.

Calculated from: Birth, calving and death dates from BCMS

Unit of measurement: Parities (number of calvings)

Interpretation: Wedderlie Ebsolvent has a productive lifespan EBV of 0.55. Based on a herd of 100 cows, a herd sired by Wedderlie Ebsolvent will have an average of 25 more calvings between them before being replaced, than a herd sired by a bull with a productive lifespan EBV of 0.

KPI: Herd replacement rate

Calf survival

Definition: An EBV predicting the likelihood of tagged calves surviving to 10 months of age.

Calculated from: Birth and death dates from BCMS

Unit of measurement: Percentage

Interpretation: Wedderlie Ebsolvent has a calf survival EBV of 6%. On average, he will produce progeny who are 3% more likely to survive to 10 months of age than progeny from a bull with a calf survival EBV of 0.

KPI: Calves weaned, as a percentage of females put to the bull

Remember: The EBV relates to the bull's genetic merit. He contributes 50% of his genetics to his progeny, therefore the average progeny performance is 50% of the EBV value.

What this means for your business

We see high variation for these three traits in all breeds, and as usual the variation within breeds is higher than the variation we see across breeds. The heritability of these new maternal EBVs ranges from 4% (calf survival) to 11% (age at first calving). All the EBVs on the National Beef Evaluations database are available to compare across breeds, which is not possible via breed society evaluations. However, we recommend looking at our EBVs alongside the relevant pedigree breed evaluation, as the two sets of information are complementary to each other.

How to access the data

The new EBVs are hosted alongside EBVs for carcass traits on the AHDB National Beef Evaluations website at ahdbbeef.egenes.co.uk, and you can search by pedigree name or ear tag number. You can also access them directly from the animal record page on Breedplan or Signet, depending on your breed of interest.

For further information, contact:

Dr Alex Brown

Senior Beef Breeding and Genetics Manager

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Winter feeding considerations for in-calf beef heifers

Getting winter feeding right for in-calf beef heifers is crucial to future herd performance and profitability. In support of AHDB's Maternal Matters campaign, Debby Brown, Veterinary Technical Manager at Dugdale Nutrition, explains more.



In-calf heifers have many demands as they continue to grow (at approximately 0.5 kg/day), as well as develop the calf, prepare for lactation and be ready to get back in calf for the following year.

Body condition

In-calf beef heifers ideally should have a body condition score 2.75–3 at calving, weigh 85% of mature cow bodyweight and should not change their body condition score by more than 0.5 over the winter-feeding period.

Getting the body condition score right for calving will reduce the risk of calving difficulties and will give the best chance for optimal colostrum quality and milk production. It will also reduce the interval to oestrus and therefore improve her ability to get back in calf for a 365-day calving interval.

Housing

Housing and management of in-calf beef heifers is as important as the feed itself. Feed space should be at least 750 mm per head to allow the group to all access feed easily together. These heifers can be housed in cubicles or loose housing, ensuring enough space. Ideally, stock cubicles at 90% occupancy and move to loose housing either two weeks before or at the point of calving. The loose housing area will be dependent on the weight of the heifers but allow approximately 3.5–4 m² bedded area per head, with a total area of 5–6 m² per head.

Feed requirement

For most of the winter the feed requirement will be for maintenance and the average 0.5 kg/head growth. Calculate the requirement as follows:

Maintenance = 5 + 0.1 x liveweight, Growth = 1.5 x Maintenance, Pregnancy = about 5 MJ

An average 500 kg heifer will have a requirement of approximately 88–90 MJ ME per day.

During mid-pregnancy the crude protein requirement of the diet is approximately 11% but this ideally should be increased to 14% in the last 3–4 weeks pre-calving.

500 kg in-calf beef heifers are likely to have a dry matter intake of approximately 10 kg.

Importance of protein

A protein supplement will be useful close to calving to support the colostrum and milk production. Reducing the straw and increasing the silage closer to calving will also help increase the energy density of the diet and the overall protein level to support the heifer through the calving process and get her ready for lactation and preparation for service a few weeks later.

For more information visit the nutrition for heifers link on the AHDB Maternal Matters webpage ahdb.org.uk/maternal-matters

For further information, contact:

Debby Brown

Veterinary Technical Manager at Dugdale Nutrition
brp@ahdb.org.uk

Winter dietary requirements for heifers

Example diets	Mid-pregnancy (kg)		Pre-calving (kg)	
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 1	Option 2
Silage 35% DM, 10.5 MJ ME, 14% CP	21	15	25	18
Straw 85% DM, 6 MJ ME, 4% CP	3	3	1	1
Wholecrop 40% DM, 10.5 MJ ME, 9.5% CP	-	5	-	5
Protein supplement, e.g. rapemeal	-	0.3	0.5	0.8

MJ = megajoules; ME = metabolisable energy; DM = dry matter; CP = crude protein

Ensure your lambs survive and thrive by optimising **EWE NUTRITION**



For a strong, healthy lamb you need a strong, healthy ewe. AHDB's Senior Animal Health and Welfare Scientist, Dr Lis King, reflects on the importance of reviewing ewe nutrition ahead of the lambing season.



England has seen some of the driest conditions in almost 90 years. Grass yields (kg DM/ha) this year are visibly lower, impacted by the dry weather and lack of soil moisture. Less visible perhaps is the impact on grass quality with the possibility of reduced protein and energy content. Assessing the quality of forage to be fed to pregnant ewes this winter will ensure your lambs survive and thrive and prevent ewes from losing condition.

Key to success at lambing is ewe body condition and the right balance of energy and protein during pregnancy to meet development needs. This is essential for:

- Placental development
- Foetal development, growth and birth weight
- Ewe mammary gland development
- Colostrum quality and quantity
- Lamb survival and immunity to disease
- Ewe mothering ability

Forage analysis

As any nutritionist will tell you, forage analysis is critical to establish whether supplementation is required. The quality of your forage harvest will vary year to year and with each cut. Forage analysis will help support the best outcomes in feed budget decisions and ensure you're not wasting money on too little or too much supplementary feed. Carry out sampling in late autumn to enable sufficient time to make adjustments. Identifying the best quality forage will enable you to feed the best closest to lambing.

Ewe management

Use forage analysis along-side pregnancy scanning and ewe body condition scores to split ewes into management groups for preferential feeding according to need (e.g. triplet, twin bearing and thin ewes). Ewe lambs and shearlings should be managed separately to mature ewes as they are still growing during pregnancy and will need approximately 20% more feed than mature ewes of the same weight.

Matching demand with feed supply and supplementing as necessary can feel like a daunting task. Seeking advice from your vet or nutritionist will help develop suitable rations for your flock. Getting it right has additional benefits – stronger lambs at birth reduces the need for antibiotic treatments and increases lamb survival.

Key points

- Ensure ewes maintain their target body condition scores throughout pregnancy: 3.0–3.5 for lowland and 2.5 for upland ewes
- Carry out forage analysis – knowing its quality enables appropriate feed rations to be calculated
- Consider asking your vet to take blood samples 3–4 weeks before lambing to assess the adequacy of nutrition in late pregnancy
- Pregnant ewe lambs and shearlings require additional feed and should be fed in a separate group by litter size to mature ewes

For further information, contact:

Dr Lis King

Senior Animal Health and Welfare Scientist
lis.king@ahdb.org.uk

Integrating beef production INTO ARABLE ROTATIONS

High costs and increasing competition for land means that starting or expanding beef enterprises can be challenging. Some beef producers are grazing cattle on arable units. Dr Lizzie Sagoo, ADAS soil scientist and project lead, explains why this makes good business sense.



The AHDB-funded 'Sustainable beef systems on arable units' project was set up to look at the benefits of integrating beef into arable rotations. Measurements were carried out at two farm sites, one in Cambridgeshire (Thriplow Farm) and the other in Somerset (Norwood Farm).

Improving soil health

Continuous arable cropping with annual cultivations and little or no inputs of organic materials have led to reductions in soil organic matter content. Temporary leys have the potential to increase soil organic matter levels by stopping annual cultivation and increasing the return of organic matter in the form of root and litter turnover.

Measurements at Norwood Farm showed a significant improvement in soil properties after three years of grass and clover, and multi-species leys. Topsoil organic matter increased by an average of 0.3 percentage points, an increase of 6 t/ha organic matter in the top 15 cm of soil and earthworm numbers increased by 60%.

These improvements to soil properties can be expected to benefit following arable crops in the rotation. Organic matter holds approximately 10 times its weight in water, therefore the 6 t/ha increase in organic matter content measured at Norwood can be expected to increase water holding capacity by approximately 60,000 litres per hectare in the top 15 cm, equivalent to 6 mm of rainfall. Spring barley yields were increased by 0.7 t/ha following the three-year grass and clover ley at Norwood Farm compared to continuous arable production.

Understanding the economics

This project has shown that there is potential for the arable farmer to make a positive margin from cattle grazing a ley in an arable rotation. A cost-benefit analysis of integrating beef into arable systems at both Thriplow and Norwood Farms showed a positive net margin of around £250/ha (before rent and finance). AHDB Farmbench results showed that whilst these margins cannot match the returns from a winter wheat crop, they are as good as if not better than some of the other common combinable crops, especially a traditional break crop of winter beans. Furthermore, margins can be improved by entering the land into a subsidy or stewardship agreement and by accounting for the increased yields from the following arable crop.

The AHDB Market Intelligence team has created a simple Excel-based tool to help farmers calculate potential costs and margins of integrating beef into arable rotations. It is available online at bit.ly/ForCalc

For further information, contact:

Dr Lizzie Sagoo
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brp@ahdb.org.uk



A summer of events

Following a busy summer of events, the AHDB Beef & Lamb Knowledge Exchange team have enjoyed getting back out on the road and meeting people face-to-face once again, supporting and informing our farming communities. Here is a roundup of some of the events we have been to this summer.



NSA sheep event



The Great Yorkshire Show

Talking all things beef at Beef Expo 2022

Back in May this year, AHDB Beef & Lamb sponsored and supported the National Beef Association's Beef Expo event at its new venue, Darlington Farmers Mart. The event was not only a great networking opportunity but also gave us chance to catch up with people in person again after two years of Covid restrictions.

Members of the Beef & Lamb Knowledge Exchange team and Export team were on the AHDB stand talking about the Shape the Future results, beef export activity, We Eat Balanced messages and technical projects including Maternal Matters and the Farm Excellence programme.

Will Jackson, AHDB's Divisional Engagement Director, also sat on the panel for the 'Future of Agricultural Support' seminar where he talked about UK beef credentials providing us with the ability to market our product at home and abroad as well as our We Eat Balanced promotion. Great thanks go to everyone who paid us a visit, we hope to see you there next year.



Winners of the Best Indoor Stand at the NSA sheep event

Opening its gates for the first time in four years, the National Sheep Association (NSA) Sheep Event 2022 drew crowds from across the UK to enjoy a fantastic day out at the Three Counties Showground, Worcestershire on 27 July.

Focusing on a positive future for the sector, the association's flagship event attracted prominent names from industry to lead seminar discussions and pass on valuable experience in practical workshops. The event also welcomed Defra Minister Victoria Prentis, who spoke about the future of sheep farming in the UK, as well as her Defra team who shared useful information on future farming schemes.

AHDB Beef & Lamb were one of the event's main sponsors and the team were delighted to be announced as the winners of the Best Indoor Stand award.

With the event's future firmly set, NSA looks forward to welcoming visitors to the 2024 event, to be held once again at the Three Counties Showground, Worcestershire on Tuesday 30 July 2024.

Breakfast at the Great Yorkshire Show

The team at AHDB were thrilled to take part in a breakfast panel discussion on the opening day of the Great Yorkshire Show to share the results from the Shape the Future vote and plans for how the levy will be spent.

Panellists included Tim Rycroft (AHDB CEO), Charlie Beaty (livestock farmer and Farmers Weekly columnist), Dr Phil Hadley (AHDB International Markets Director) and Phil Halhead (Ag Advocate, livestock farmer and Director of Norbreck Genetics Ltd). The session was hosted by Sheep Farmer of the Year 2018, Clare Wise Chapman.

Huge thanks to everyone who came along on the day. It was incredibly beneficial to speak to as many of you as possible and to gather feedback to take into the planning stage of the new strategy.

Identifying the cause of death through post-mortems

AHDB ran a series of post-mortem events over the late spring and summer months in conjunction with Mole Country Stores, Wynnstay, Elcano, and Nantwich Veterinary Group. The events focused on worming sheep and how to reduce the risk of medication resistance becoming more prevalent. The events demonstrated the importance of undertaking worm egg counts alongside a treatment plan for the flock.

Vet Ben Strugnell, from Farm Post Mortems Ltd, undertook a number of post-mortems on lambs and ewes to show the damage that worm burdens can do to the rumen and intestinal tract of the sheep. Ben demonstrated the challenge with knowing whether a wormer has worked, unless we do a post-treatment egg count from treated animals, and post-mortems to ensure the sheep have died of worm burden and not of another cause.

A great trip to Groundswell

Earlier in the year, the AHDB Beef & Lamb team joined our colleagues from Cereals & Oilseeds at Lannock Manor Farm in Hertfordshire for Groundswell 2022.

The event was a great opportunity to hear about agroecological and regenerative farming approaches and the latest research. The stand featured information about the latest AHDB-funded research project into sustainable beef systems on arable units, and technical information about a number of topics including grassland management and herbal leys.

AHDB staff hosted several seminar sessions over the two days of the event, hosting one of our Monitor Farmers, Ian Farrant, and ADAS soil scientist Lizzie Sagoo.

The event was a great opportunity to support producers looking to assess the many ideas promoted at Groundswell.

For further information go to ahdb.org.uk/events

Meet your Beef & Lamb knowledge exchange managers

Your local Knowledge Exchange Manager (KEM) is your first point of call for any support or guidance you require to help you succeed and develop your farm business. The team is dedicated to improving the flow and uptake of knowledge throughout the supply chain in order to help you maximise your returns, understand the cost of production and react to the changing environment and legislation.

KE Manager (Midlands)

EMMA STEELE

Emma Steele, KE Manager (East Midlands), joined the KE team in Autumn 2019 after starting at AHDB in 2016 as part of Signet Breeding Services. Emma is from a mixed livestock farm in East Yorkshire and is currently the primary contact for beef and sheep levy payers in the East Midlands. Emma has expertise in sheep and beef genetic evaluations for commercial and pedigree breeders.

emma.steele@ahdb.org.uk m: 07392 319813



KE Manager (South East and East of England)

NERYS WRIGHT

Nerys Wright is KE Manager for the South East and East of England regions. She has a strong technical background in sheep production including ewe nutrition, body condition scoring, worm control, and lameness. Nerys is a qualified farm animal SQP and has a PhD in sheep body condition scoring and its impact on flock performance.

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KE Manager (South West)

LEAH SHANKS

Leah Shanks, KE Manager (South West), joined AHDB in 2019 having previously gained an MSc in Veterinary Microbiology from the University of Surrey. Before AHDB, Leah worked in policy and communications for the Antimicrobial Resistance team at the Veterinary Medicines Directorate.

leah.shanks@ahdb.org.uk m: 07979 943392



KE Manager (North East)

EMILY SYMONDS

Emily Symonds, KE Manager (North East), joined the team with experience across the beef and lamb supply chain. After graduating with a BSc in Animal Science she enrolled on to ABP's graduate programme within the technical team. She then moved to QMS, working on market development and exports. Most recently she has been working within the R&D sector linking businesses up with science then translating the knowledge back to a business/farm level.

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KE Manager (North West)

KARL PENDLEBURY

Karl Pendlebury, KE Manager (North West), has more than 35 years' experience in the beef and lamb sector and has expertise in the technical aspect of the red meat industry. Karl is experienced in animal trading, auditing of food businesses and has worked with major retailers in their technical supply chains as a specifications manager.

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NEWS & UPDATES

Events

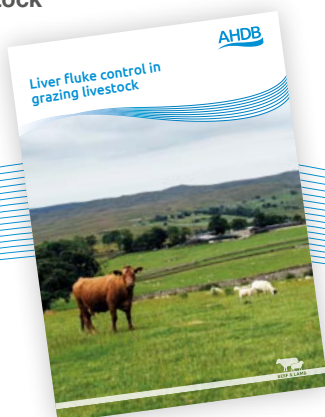
- 6 December:** Northumberland B&L Strategic Farm event
- 6 December:** Grazing fodder beet for cattle and sheep (Nottinghamshire)
- 8 December** - Grazing fodder beet for cattle and sheep (North Yorkshire)
- 9 December:** Grazing fodder beet for cattle and sheep (North Yorkshire)
- 23 January:** BCBC Conference 2023 with workshops from AHDB Beef & Lamb

Webinars

- 30 November:** Managing lameness in sheep
- 13 December:** Preventing navel ill this calving season
- For a full list of events and to register your place, please visit ahdb.org.uk/events

Launch of AHDB's new liver fluke manual

Last week saw the launch of a new manual to help farmers control liver fluke in grazing livestock, in a joint levy-body effort to control what can be a devastating disease. Produced by AHDB, QMS and HCC the manual highlights the latest research and advice on control practices to protect livestock from potential animal health and welfare damage posed by liver fluke. Using five farmer case studies from across Great Britain, the manual covers a variety of management systems and fluke risk levels. View the manual online or order your hard copy ahdb.org.uk/knowledge-library/liver-fluke-control-in-grazing-livestock



News

Have you subscribed to AHDB's Food & Farming podcast channel?

Our Food & Farming podcast is for levy payers and those in the food supply chain – bringing together key players in the agriculture industry to talk about the things which really matter.

AHDB

ahdb.org.uk/podcast

A graphic of a smartphone with a purple podcast icon on the screen, set against a blue and green background with a white wave-like shape at the bottom.

AHDB STAFF TAKE ON THE EDALE SKYLINE CHALLENGE IN THE PEAK DISTRICT

The AHDB Beef & Lamb Knowledge Exchange Team, joined by two of AHDB's Directors Paul Flanagan and Will Jackson, took on the Edale Skyline Challenge in the Peak District last month to raise money for a remarkable charity, The Royal Agricultural Benefit Institution (R.A.B.I.).

R.A.B.I is a grant-making charity that helps farming people of all ages if they are in financial difficulty. Support is confidential and includes one-off or regular payments, funding for things like essential household items, disability equipment, relief farm staff, home-help and care costs.

The Edale Skyline challenge is no mean feat at 22 miles in length with 4,600 ft of ascent. The team successfully completed their challenge and exceeded their target to raise £1,000 for R.A.B.I. At the time of print, the total amount raised is £1,659.

Richard Tower of Peak Walking Adventures said: "This was a team that arrived early, began early, and put their boots to work, achieving their challenge ahead of schedule! They have supported a really worthwhile charitable cause and their positive approach and teamwork really paid off. It was a pleasure and privilege to walk with them."

The Just Giving page is live until 5 February 2023 so if you wish to donate, please visit justgiving.com/fundraising/ahdb-beefandlamb

