

News from the Farm Advisory Service:



FASTV FROM PE TEACHER TO FARMER



FAS TV - From PE teacher to farmer

In this episode of FAS TV, we head to Aberdeenshire to hear from Elaine Wilson, a third generation farmer at Gellyhill Farm. Elaine inherited the farm 10 years ago and she has made changes to improve efficiency in the business, including doubling the number of cattle fattened each year.

Find this video by scanning the QR code below or search for Scotland's Farm Advisory Service on YouTube.



Key dates to remember

30th August 2024

Revised closing date for the June Census 2024

1st September 2024

Scottish Upland Support Scheme Application window closes

Funded support for new entrants - Integrated Land Management Plans

If you are new to farming and have set up or become head of a business in the last five years, an Integrated Land Management Plan (ILMP) can provide a holistic approach to ensure your farm or croft remains sustainable and profitable for the years ahead.

Funded through the Farm Advisory Service (FAS) and delivered by a qualified advisor, this support offers a comprehensive assessment and plan tailored to your business.

'An ILMP provides new farmers or crofters an opportunity to look at their business from the ground up and determine the most appropriate enterprises to fit the location, land capability, available resources, and their vision for the

new business. It explores diversification enterprises that could boost the overall viability and sustainability of the business, as well as signposting to further information, training, and available grants. An ILMP can look at these aspects, and where appropriate, offer action points and further Specialist Advice to take the business forward.' – Christine Beaton, Senior Rural Business Management & Economics Consultant (SAC Consulting).

Up to £2,000 is available for new entrants to cover the full cost of an ILMP. Find out more and apply at www.fas.scot/integrated-land-management-plans-ilmps/ or contact advice@fas.scot or 0300 323 0161.

Plant extracts for enteric methane reduction

This is a rapidly growing area of research, to identify feeding strategies to reduce enteric methane emissions. Some plants produce secondary compounds that possess methane reducing properties, however due to the inherent variability of natural sources this can present a challenge in determining or predicting efficacy. Inhibitors work by targeting pathways that are essential to methane formation or targeting enzymes that are found only in some methanogens (rumen archaea that produce methane).



Naturally occurring compounds found in plants such as tannins and saponins have shown promising reductions in methane, however more long-term studies are required. Essential oils are naturally occurring secondary metabolites and volatile components that possess anti-microbial properties. The exact mode of action varies between different essential oils but includes disruption of cell membranes and inactivation of microbial enzymes. Seaweed is another natural resource that has emerged as an animal feed ingredient with the potential to reduce methane. Red seaweed found in tropical marine waters has shown a promising reduction in methane, however the active ingredient (bromoform) is a potential carcinogen and due to the naturally high content of iodine this does currently limit its inclusion level.

In the UK, at present there is only one synthetic feed additive approved for methane reduction - Bovaer®. However, retailers such as Morrisons have recently announced collaborations with research institutes working in this space. As retailers continue to invest in this research in an effort to reach their ambition to achieve net zero agriculture emissions from their suppliers, it is likely we will see more of these products being made available.

Mary Young, SAC Consulting

This article is featured in the August edition of Agribusiness News. To read more, visit: www.fas.scot/publication/agribusiness-news-august-2024/

Free Events

At the Farm Advisory Service we run a range of events both online and in-person.

Visit www.fas.scot/events to sign up or contact the advice line and we'll help you get booked on.

Farm Wildlife Walks - Dumfries
Thornhill, 19th August, 1:00pm - 3:00pm

Management and Selection of Tups for Efficiency Webinar
Online, 20th August, 7:30pm - 8:30pm

Crofting in Shetland - Agri-Environment & Peatland Day
Sandness, 24th August, 10:00am - 3:00pm

Navigating the Future of Farming
Luining, 28th August, 1:30pm - 4:30pm

Selecting finished lambs

It is important to know when your lambs are ready for sale so that you can maximise returns from your flock.

Regularly weighing lambs and splitting them into groups based on their weight can help you predict when your lambs will be ready for sale. Lambs should be weighed empty, to exclude belly-fill as a factor affecting weights, and weigh crates should be calibrated and checked regularly. Ideally you are looking for lambs to be in a liveweight range of 42-48 kg as this will then roughly equate to a deadweight of 16-22 kg.

As well as weighing lambs you also need to feel to see how fleshy they are and what amount of fat cover they have. Abattoirs base their price on the EUROP grid and many buyers in the market will also have this in mind when bidding on a pen of lambs. The EUROP grid considers the conformation and the fat cover of the carcass. The conformation is graded as a letters E, U, R, O and P where the conformation decreases as you go through the letters. The fat class is based on numbers 1-5, with the higher number being a fat cover.

Base price is set on an R3L carcass. As the grade moves further down the conformation and up the fat class from an R3L the price is base less a penalty, due to more trimming being required and therefore a reduction in the amount of saleable meat.

Market Signals

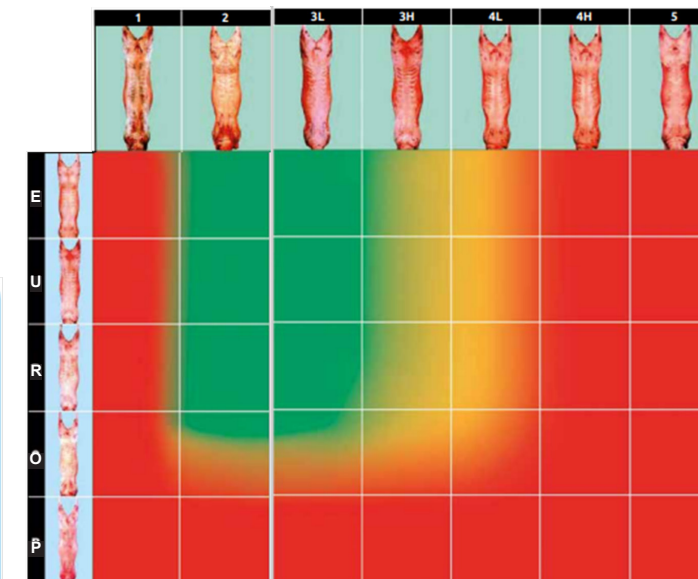


Figure 1. The EUROP grid

Kirstyn Blackwood & Beth Errington, SAC Consulting

For the full article on selecting finished lambs, including a video, please visit: www.fas.scot/article/selecting-finished-lambs-a-practical-guide/

Scotland's Farm Advisory Service is funded by the Scottish Government. It is delivered by SAC Consulting, part of Scotland's Rural College, and Ricardo Energy and Environment.

National Advice Hub
T: 0300 323 0161
E: advice@fas.scot
W: www.fas.scot

If you need more advice on any topic, the Farm Advisory Service has a range of support and help available:

Advice line

For free telephone advice on a wide variety of topics including cross compliance, water framework directive requirements, climate change and other technical issues call us on 0300 323 0161 or email advice@fas.scot. The advice line operates between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday.

Bespoke Advice and Grants

FAS can also help you to increase the profitability and sustainability of your farming business through Scottish Government grants including Integrated Land Management Plans (ILMPs) – worth up to £2,000.

The ILMP will identify opportunities and cost savings for your business, based on an independent and confidential assessment of your business by an experienced farm business adviser of your choosing. As part of your plan you can choose to benefit from up to two further specialist advice plans.

Online

Our website contains articles, videos and much more at www.fas.scot