

## SHETLAND MONITOR FARM ANNUAL REPORT YEAR TWO

Farm name **Bigton Farm, Bigton, Shetland, ZE2 9JA**

Bigton Farm is a family run farm, managed by Kirsty and Aimee Budge, with help from their Grandad, Jim and other family members at busy times throughout the year.

**Land:** Two units are run together, covering 305ha of inbye and rough grazing.

**Crops:** Around 25ha of spring barley is grown, 4ha of forage rape and about 40ha of silage cut.

**Cattle:** 82 Shorthorn x Saler cows producing Saler or Charolais x calves which are sold store.

**Sheep:** 350 Shetland x Cheviot breeding ewes which are put to a Suffolk tup. Replacements are bought in.

**Management group members are:** Jamie Leslie (Chairman): Scholland Farm, Graham Fraser: SAC Consulting, Kirsty Budge: Bigton Farm, Aimee Budge: Bigton Farm, Lauraine Manson: Hestigarth, Walls and Shetland Livestock Marketing Group, Hilary Burgess: Quendale Farm and Shetland Animal Health Scheme, Eric Graham: Gremista Farm, Jim Tait: Shetland Vets, John Abernethy: Verdahill, Twatt, Johnina Henderson: Breckon, Yell, John Sandison: Parkview, Bigton, Aaron Sinclair: Sandlodge Farm, Jacob Eunson: Uradale, Matthew Westmoreland: Hoversta, Bressay

## MEETING TOPICS

Topics for discussion are prompted by the management group, made up of 10 local farmers and the farm vet, as well as the Budge family and the facilitators. The management group were chosen from the wider community to ensure they are representative. They act as a link between the facilitators and hosts and the community group as well as using their experience to help drive the project. The topics are chosen to benefit the community group as a whole, and reflect the challenges faced on Shetland.

Future topics include:

- Karen Scholes -Accountancy and software
- Derek Hanton - Bigton Farm audit update
- Jim Logan – rotational grazing
- Bigton Data – workshop
- Charlie Morgan – grass and soils
- Dr Philip Skuce – fluke and worms
- Jamie Robertson – livestock building ventilation

**Meeting Dates 2019/20**

2<sup>nd</sup> March

8<sup>th</sup> June

17<sup>th</sup> August

6<sup>th</sup> October (Sunday)

30<sup>th</sup> Nov or 14<sup>th</sup> Dec

8<sup>th</sup> February 2020

## MEETING SUMMARY YEAR TWO

Date	Attendance	Aims	Outcomes
13 <sup>th</sup> & 14 <sup>th</sup> January	42	Growing and finishing cattle Live grading followed by carcass grading in Shetland Abattoir Lamb finishing rations.	Adding value to sheep by feeding concentrates aiming to market them locally in Shetland and getting the correct ration for growth rate and profit. Assessing when lambs are ready for slaughter and given suitable feeding almost any animal can yield a useable marketable carcass.
17 <sup>th</sup> March	40	Personal Development Marketing Shetland hill lambs Animal health planning	Getting started in farming, Rural Leadership Programme and encouraging young people into farming. Targeting the Christmas lamb market for small lambs. Health planning can reduce losses and save costs.
3 <sup>rd</sup> June	40	Making profit from grassland Maximising ewe performance	Grow lots of pasture and utilise 80% Allocate minimum pasture to achieve production objectives Aim to consistently maximise the number of lambs born and improve the weight of lambs sold
25 <sup>th</sup> August	60	Improve grassland productivity and utilisation	Concentrate on managing grass which is more cost-effective than spending money on inputs. Rotational grazing can be simple shift over long periods. Using rotations will extend the growing season. Consider winter forage crops
7 <sup>th</sup> October	37	Nutrition and reproduction of the beef cow Selecting replacement tups	Analyse your silage and calculate how much dry matter is available. Match best feed to most demanding stock. Check feed labels. Energy most important but protein deficiency can impact on calf birth weight, colostrum, and calf survival. Decide what you want from your tup. EBVs are a valuable tool in conjunction with a visual and physical inspection.

1 <sup>st</sup> December	34	<p>Succession planning</p> <p>Footrot in sheep</p>	<p>Have a succession plan and make a will</p> <p>Discuss succession issues with your accountant.</p> <p>Discuss your footrot reduction programme with your vet.</p>
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## ATTENDANCE

Total attendance in year 2 was 253, average of 42 at each meeting

### FACILITATOR CONTACT DETAILS

Graham Fraser, Derek Hanton, Jocelyn Clapp,  
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