

ABOUT SUTHERLAND MONITOR FARM

Farm name	Clynelish Farm, Brora, Sutherland, KW9 6LR
Next Meeting	Wednesday 13th February 2019, 11am Brora Golf Course, Brora, KW9 6QS

Clynelish Farm is a 125-hectare farm run by Jason Ballantyne and his wife Vic, in partnership with Jason's dad Murdo.

Cattle: The family runs 80 suckler cows with calves sold store at 10 months of age. Cows are all out-wintered.

Sheep: There is a flock of 900 breeding ewes, of which about half are Lairg type Cheviots and the other half Lleyn cross, currently lamb outdoors at the end of April.

Management Group: John Scott (Chair) Rory MacKenzie, Sheena MacKenzie, Brian MacLeod, Danny Miller, Iain MacKenzie, Donald Ross

The vision for the Ballantyne's is to have a "Low input, High out" farming system while making the most of what they have. They want to improve the consistency of their product and attention to detail while being positive and innovative. Most importantly they want to maintain a good work/life balance.

MEETING TOPICS

Topics for discussion at each meeting are set by Management team. All the topics are shaped around the benefits to the host and the wider community group members.

We have found it key to have influential speakers who are an expert in their field attend all our meetings.

Future meeting topics for 2019 are to include:-

- Soil clinic with James Bretherton
- Diversification
- Collaboration
- Parasite Control
- Mental Health

Meeting Dates 2019

- 13th February
- 13th March
- June date TBC
- 11th September
- 27th November

As with every meeting we have a farm update from Jason & Vic on the current state of play on the farm and what has been happening in between meetings.

YEAR TWO MEETINGS SUMMARY

Date	Attendance	Aims	Outcomes
Jan 30	25	Lifestyle & Balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tackling the tricky topic of succession within a farm business - How to approach the subject - Benefits of planning ahead - What steps to take - Complete AECS Scheme Application for consideration - Cattle blood tested
Mar 8	25	Soil Management & Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How to assess soil structure & good health - Benefits of soil sampling and understanding the results - What makes a good soil - How to manage your soil - Importance of drainage & costs - Sheep scanning results shared and discussed - Calf weighs and feeding costs shared, opportunity to improve DLWG - Decision made to sell the Angus steers
June 6	28	Using Pastures Profitably	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making the most from your pasture - The big 5 areas to maximise profit in pasture - Knowing how to control the allocation of grass - Measuring your pasture - Full breakdown of winter costs shared and discussed - New fencing and water troughs to be erected following a discussion on rotational grazing
July 25	39	Off Farm – Community Farm visit to look at other farming opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Benefits and costs of different sheep handling systems – J&V to consider options for Clynelish - Clipex fencing – 30 -year guarantee fencing solutions - Use of drones in farming – Innovation Fund to be applied to for a drone - Alternative to black wrap, Silostop – air tight seal wrap for bales

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lots to think about from this meeting!
Sept 11	35	Open Meeting - Winter Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How to MOT and condition score Tups - Importance of Ewe nutrition - How to condition score ewes from pre-tupping to weaning. - Winter grazing – plan now - Be sure to analyse your silage and understanding the results - No ewe hogs to be tupped for 2019 - Complete winter- feeding budget costs
Dec 12	32	Taking Stock – Feeding for winter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How to calculate your forage and knowing what you have and is it enough for the winter - Knowing how much to feed and the when are the critical times for stock - Cattle & Ewe Rationing - Recapped on the last 12 months - Community group reasons for attending the meetings and what they feel they are getting out of the programme. - List of proposed scenarios to consider for 2019 - The plan for 2019

ATTENDANCE

- We have had a very good turnout at our 2018 meetings averaging 30 attendees – which is good considering the spread- out nature of farming in the remote area of Sutherland and the distance travelled by many of the group. We find that people will pick and choose what meetings they want to attend by the topics being discussed and what is most applicable to them. Our community group are a good interactive group of people, all with varying degrees of knowledge who are not afraid to speak out. We have had some excellent breakout sessions, generating some great ideas, scenarios and challenges to consider for 2019.

FACILITATOR CONTACT DETAILS

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