

ABOUT THIS MONITOR FARM

Farm name	Mill of Inverarity, Inverarity, Forfar, Angus, DD8 2JN
Meeting Number	17 – Beef Enterprise Review
Meeting Date	Tuesday 4 th February 2020
Next Meeting	27 th February 2020
Report date	7 th February 2020

Mill of Inverarity Farm is run by The Stodart family and in total the business farms 358 hectares. The farm is a traditional mixed unit growing 130 hectares of cereals, with 110 spring calving suckler cows and an increasing breeding flock of 860 ewes. The business also annually buys in store cattle and lambs for finishing and has an operational laying hen enterprise on farm of 4,500 hens.

This meeting focusing on the beef enterprises reviewing the changes that have taken place at Mill of Inverarity farm over the past three years. The afternoon session then turned its attention to climate change, again focusing on the impact from beef cows.

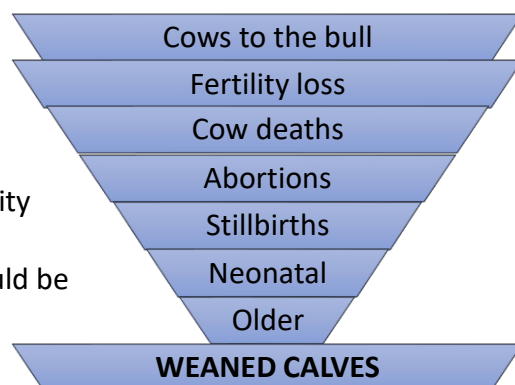
Management Group: Graeme Mather, Fiona Lawson, Ian Pattullo, Neil McGowan, Stuart Lawrie, Duncan Wilson, Graeme Neill, John Kidd, Robin Norrie.

KEY MESSAGES

- Beef herd profitability is directly correlated to number of calves sold.
- Identification of calf losses will allow further investigation and identification of problems.
- Technical improvements can reduce but not eliminate emission from beef cows.
- Biogenic carbon is not accounted for by the IPCC because it is released back into the atmosphere in a short time period, therefore sequestration to offset farm emissions must be long term such as trees.

AREAS OF DISCUSSION Expand on two of the key messages discussed and what were the key concerns or innovations

- A high scanning percentage is crucial to ensure that there are enough calves for sale after all of the losses are accounted for.
- The Monitor Farm has made huge progress in their herd fertility and they successfully weaned all calves which reached one week of age. However, there are still improvements which could be made as there are deaths associated with hard calvings.



- The carbon footprint of a farm is usually lowest when the farm is making efficient use of its resources, this is in the farmer's interest to do so. For example, if there are more calves weaned, income will increase and emissions will reduce as there are more kilos of output.
- Efficiency measures can reduce a farms carbon footprint and soil carbon sequestration can help to offset those emissions, however, this will only be a small proportion of what is emitted. As a very ball-park figure, if a farmer were to take one hectare of 'average' grassland with around 100 tonnes of carbon as the original starting stock and then implement some basic improvement (say e.g. sowing more productive species), that could increase C stocks by around 14% over 20 years. This is equivalent to approximately ¼ of emission from a beef cow.

FARMERS UPDATE Summarise the development of the initiatives on the farm

- This meeting update from Rory Stodart focused on the changes at the farm within the beef enterprises including: removing the autumn calving, developing the clean herd, using more native breeds, trying AI of heifers, using rotational grazing, reducing suckler cow numbers and stopping finishing cattle.
- The improvements in fertility and calf rearing are detailed below:

	2017	2018	2019	2020
Cows to the bull	208	130	107	108
Scanned in calf	160 (77%)	107 (82%)	99 (93%)	100 (93%)
Calves born alive	157 (75%)	95 (73%)	97 (91%)	-
Calves born dead	3 (1%)	1 (7%)	2 (2%)	-
Calves died before weaning	4 (2%)	3 (2%)	2 (2%)	-
Calves Reared	153 (74%)	92 (71%)	95 (89%)	-

ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING Bullet points outlining what will be done between now and the next meeting

- The management group will continue to plan the final meeting, ensuring that there are speakers who can cover all the benefits of the Monitor Farm programme.
- The business group has until the 27th February to update their benchmarking figures following on from the feedback meeting in January.

FACILITATOR CONTACT DETAILS

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