

## ABOUT SUTHERLAND MONITOR FARM

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| Farm name      | <b>Clynelish Farm, Brora, Sutherland, KW9 6LR</b>               |
| Meeting Number | <b>07 – Lifestyle Balance and Succession</b>                    |
| Meeting Date   | <b>Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2018</b>                     |
| Next Meeting   | <b>Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2018 – Grassland and Soils</b> |

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 run 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.



*Heather Wildman spoke about succession planning*

Unusually for the area, the cattle and sheep enterprises are both on forage based diets with virtually no concentrate feeding.



### Management Group:

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

## KEY MESSAGES

The key messages delivered from this meeting on succession and lifestyle were:-

- Everyone is unique – one size does not fit all.
- Know where you are in terms of your succession planning
- You need a vision, communication and collaboration
- Know your business agreements

## AREAS OF DISCUSSION

With succession an emotive and difficult subject for any business, Heather Wildman opened the meeting by asking all attendees to mark themselves 1-10 in terms of where they are in terms of their succession planning: with 1 being where nothing had been planned or even discussed and 10 being everything planned, discussed and sorted in terms of family members, wills and all eventualities. All attendees marked themselves as 6 or above.

Heather then recommended taking small steps in succession planning and following this order:-

- Create a plan
- Take advice
- Keep control
- Communicate with family
- Have a facilitator
- Write a will
- Draw up a business agreement
- Know your numbers

Futhermore to tackle vision, dreams and collaboration she suggested:-

- Vision – identify goals and how to reach them, follow your dreams and ambitions
- Communication – write and share
- Collaboration – cannot be done alone!

## FARMERS UPDATE

Victoria and Jason Ballantyne, hot farmers, presented details on the calves as well as an update on the sheep enterprise and grass.

### Calves

- Calves housed and weighed on 14th Nov
- Calves averaged 218kg at 172 days old
- Calves were blood tested for IBR, Pneumonia, etc.
- Negative results – no action
- Calves were weighed on 21 Dec
- Eating silage and grainbeet
- Smaller calves receive 100gm/hd/day Soya
- Very keen on grainbeet

### Grass and Ewes

- Scanning next Wednesday (7 February 2018)
- Ewes with multiple lambs will go onto swedes
- Used more silage than any recent winter
- Regular body condition scoring
- Lean ewes on best grass with silage & lick
- Still rotationally grazed, though not as tightly
- Opened gates & used bedder to blow silage
- Fertiliser ordered – apply ASAP!
- Fingers crossed for dry, early Spring!

## FACTS & FIGURES DISCUSSED

The calves were weighed on 21 December

- Averaged 1.3 kg/day since weaning
- Top achieved 1.9 kg/day, bottom achieved only 0.6 kg/day
- Steers achieved 1.4 kg/day, Heifers achieved 1.2 kg/day
- Heaviest calf weighted 360kg @ 220 days old
- No huge breed differences,
- AAX a bit lighter, CHX a bit heavier (includes several sets of twins)

## OPPORTUNITIES/CHALLENGES

- Following on from the previous meeting on scenarios, it is important for Jason and Victoria to gain more information on their proposed move to finishing the Angus stirks.

## ACTIONS FROM MEETING

- To get AEC scheme information completed.
- Continue to investigate herd health
- To get cost calf finishing information from other community group members

### FACILITATOR CONTACT DETAILS

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