



FARMER LED, FARMER DRIVEN

SOUTH AYRSHIRE
1st Meeting Report
30 November 2022



MEETING REPORT

GETTING A HANDLE ON DATA AND DIETS WILL DRIVE THE PROJECT

Around **80** members of the farming community attended the meeting. As it was winter, we looked at the finishing cattle and feed inputs.

For the finishing cattle, liveweight gain of the purchased stores ranged from **1.1kg** to **1.9kg** per day averaging at **1.4kg**.

Attendees noted the beasts were in good condition and liked the use of slat mats for comfort and welfare.

The farm makes good use of home-grown feeds and the novel inclusion of breadcrumbs and as well as Supagrains. Given the rising costs of feed and variance in daily liveweight gains and suggested that silage should be analysed for energy and protein to target nutrition.

FARM FACTS

Partners: John, Alison, and David

One full time employee – Sean

- **716** hectares owned and rented
- **150** suckler cows
- **1000** breeding ewes
- **40** hectares of crops
- All progeny finished
- **200** purchased stores finished



There was a fantastic turn out of farmers at the first meeting.

PRIORITY: Target Nutrition

- Analyse silage and feed
- Soil fertility and minerals
- Make use of stubbles or forage crops

PRIORITY: Cow Fertility

- Tighten calvings
- Calve heifers at 2

PRIORITY: Recording data and using it by

- Moving to cattle EID
- Weigh cattle
- Streamline handling system to make data collection easier

KEY PRIORITIES

After visiting the farm, attendees took part in a workshop to look at the priorities for the cattle enterprise. In addition to the aforementioned, the project should consider:

- Virtual fencing to simplify calving on the hill
- Number of bull breeds
- Rotational grazing
- Business time management
- Setting out long term vision



NEXT STEPS

Over the next few months, the Monitor Farm project at Rowanston will be:

- Collecting and collating data and information on the Monitor Farm
- Establishing the Management Group and wider Community Group who will provide support, gain knowledge, and meet like-minded people
- Working with the two other Monitor Farms in the West cluster—Argyll and Stirlingshire
- Arranging a West Cluster meeting open to all before mid-March

Farm businesses can sign up to be part of the Management Group. Participants should be willing to supply their own farm data, information, and ideas.

This should lead to change and better resilience for the Monitor Farmer and themselves. Individuals can also join the wider Community Group to keep in touch with the project and receive event invites.



The Management Group will meet in early February where attendees will get a fuller picture of all the farm enterprises including the hill farm system, sucklers and sheep enterprises. The group will also set meeting topics for the year.



**To find out more or to sign up -
contact Regional Adviser
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**MONITOR
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