



“Milking Grass for Profit”

BGS, RABDF and MDC Spring Farm Walks

After overwhelmingly successful Spring Farm Walks in 2007, BGS, RABDF and MDC have decided to once again join forces and create an exciting line up of farms for 2008. This year's venues are Pembrokeshire, Yorkshire, North Devon and Scotland.

Each event starts with tea and coffee at 10:30am and includes lunch. The event is free however it is vital you register your place to enable us to cater sufficiently, please telephone RABDF on 0845 4582711 or email lauradickinson@rabdf.co.uk

Tuesday 11th March – Pembrokeshire

Bill Ridge, Vaynor Farm, Bethesda, Narberth

Topics for discussion:

- Plans to reduce the use of concentrate currently costing over £300/t
- The simplicity of a single calving block
- Concentrate versus forages for an organic system
- Low cost calf rearing
- Filling summer forage shortages
- Achieving a parlour throughput of 200 cows/hour
- Making the most of measuring grass

Tuesday 18th March – Yorkshire

Tom Rawson, Thornhill Hall Farm, Thornhill, Dewsbury

Topics for discussion:

- How to save £8000 by grazing cows throughout February
- Tracks and grazing management to keep cows out 10 months of the year
- Low cost rearing systems for young calves
- The benefits of contracting an Eastern European workforce
- Reseeding policy and using red and white clover
- The benefits of calving in spring and autumn blocks

Thursday 27th March – North Devon

Gavin Fowler, Boode Farm, Boode, Braunton

Topics for discussion:

- Savings made by reducing the housing period from 7 to 4.5 months
- Breeding a robust, healthy cow for a grazing-based system
- Cow track options
- Benefits and management of a tight Autumn calving block
- Reduced fertilizer bills and working with NVZ rules
- Improving grass swards without ploughing

Wednesday 2nd April – Scotland

Robert Kirkwood, Mouswald, Grange, Dumfries

Topics for discussion:

- Achieving 9,000 litres from a high forage system with low purchased feed
- Selecting grass and clover varieties for maximum performance
- Growing crops to fill summer forage shortages including Chicory
- Extending the grazing season with fodder beet and kale
- The challenges faced by meeting NVZ rules
- Profitable rearing of all progeny for beef or replacements