



Federation of Welsh Grassland Societies

2009
NEWSLETTER

*[Includes Local Grassland Society Programmes
covering the period
Autumn 2008 to Spring 2009]*

Secretary & Editor:
Charlie Morgan, FWGS
GDC IBERS (AU)

WINNERS OF COMPETITIONS 2008-09 AND ACTIVITIES

Achievements

Over the last four years as secretary of the Federation I believe that we have enhanced and refined our position and have developed to be better prepared for the changes ahead. This not to say we can rest on our laurels.

We have maintained the support of our key sponsors and also secured commitment from our newer sponsors. BPI agric. sponsors of the Big Bale competition have agreed to sponsor until 2012 with the view of extending to 2015.

Probably the best achievement this year in raising our profile further was for the RWAS to recognise the Big Bale silage competition as worthy of it's place alongside the Clamp Silage award in the Royal Welsh Show this year. I am very grateful to everyone involved in making this possible and hope that it will underpin the future of this competition. The entry level of all competitions this year have been good and they all met their deadlines although my assistant, Trish Pitt, suffered trying to run both silage competitions in tandem. This will not happen again!

Professor Wayne Powell, Director of IBERS has accepted the role of President to the Federation and I hope that this agreement will secure the future of FWGS under the wing of Aberystwyth University and IBERS.

My congratulations go to all our competition winners and my thanks to all our judges and sponsors that make it possible. Also congratulations to Sarah Byford for her very successful year as BGS President and thanks to her for continuing to highlight FWGS to the wider audience of BGS. Congratulations are extended also to Mr Dylan Tudur Jones, Bryn-Rhydd (South Caernarfon Grassland Society) as BGS-UK Grassland Winner.

Finally before I step down as your Secretary, I also wish to thank all the members of the Grassland Development Centre (Heather, Chris, Huw and Trish) for all their help and support in making the last 4 years as Secretary of FWGS as smooth as possible.

CHARLIE MORGAN
FWGS Secretary

FWGS COMPETITIONS 2008-2009

RESULTS - Clamp Silage Competition

Winner: **Upper Severn Grassland Society**
Mr John Parry, Goitre Farm.

Mr Parry runs 230 acre unit and 200 acres of grass keep. There are 60 Suckler cows and calves plus 60 finishing cattle. 850 ewe flock and 100 ewe lambs. The winning silage had a DM 28.5%, CP 13.2, ME 11.2 and Ammonia-N 4.8. Judges commented on how rare a self feed system is by today, but a self feed sheep system even rarer. The 4ft high indoor clamp was extremely efficient and wastage was minimal feeding 450 ewes.

Runner Up: **North Pems Grassland Society**
Messrs Tim & William James, Farthings Hook Farm.

The James' farm 482 acres of mixed dairy and arable enterprises. There are 280 cows plus 230 cattle under 24 months. Their 3 cut system amounting to 2900t is fed as part of a complete diet and total concentrates are 2.3t/cow. Analysis showed DM 34.3%, CP 16.1, ME 11.0 and ammonia-N 9.9%. Cows are yielding 8300l on a paddock and strip grazing system stocked at 2.1 cows/ha.

Finalists: **Cardigan & District**
Mr Geraint Davies, Glaspant.

Monmouth Grassland Society
Messrs Andrew and Edward Williams, Pant-y-Cwch Farm

Aberconwy Grassland Society
D.W. & L.L.A. Jones, Crud-y-Gwynt.

The All Wales Silage Competition is run in conjunction with the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society and sponsored by NatWest Bank. 2009 Judges were Martin Doyle, NatWest Bank, John Harries (2008 winner) and John Evans ex-ADAS (retired)

RESULTS – Big Bale Silage Competition

Winner: **Cardigan & District Grassland Society**
Mr Andrew Lewis, Cilgwyn Mawr.

Mr Lewis runs a 210 acre dairy and sheep farm. 67 milking cows plus followers and 450 ewes plus 160 ewe lambs. Analysis showed a DM of 46.4%, CP 17.7, ME 11.5, Ammonia-N 6.9% and a D-value of 72%. Cows are yielding 6700litres on a rotational grazing system and concentrates fed are 1.1t/hd/pa. A simple system of feeding bales in modified ring feeders with minimal waste and machinery cost, but good attention to detail were the comments from judges.

Runner-up: **Upper Severn Grassland Society**
Mr Robert Jenkins, Cilhaul.

Mr Jenkins farms 1100 acres of steep sloping SDA land. Enterprises consist of 120 Suckler cows plus bulling heifers and store cattle, plus 2650 ewes including replacements. Analysis of the one cut system showed a DM of 42.7%, CP 13.7%, ME 10.6, Ammonia-N 7.1% and a D-value of 66%. Judges were impressed with the location of stacks around the farm, all well positioned and protected with net. This reduces feeding cost and soil damage by not having to transport silage around the farm in the winter months.

Finalists: **North Pembrokeshire Grassland Society**
Mr Michael D. James, Tresienyyn Farm

Glamorgan Grassland Society
Mr Edward Thomas, Pancross Farm

The All Wales Big Bale Competition is run in conjunction with the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society and sponsored by BPI Agriculture. Judges for 2009 were Dave Davies, IBERS, Mr Jonathan Thomas (2008 Winner) and Mr Mel John, BPI Agriculture.

RESULTS – Milk Competition (via Dairy Dev. Centre)

Winner: Mr Richard Williams, Cae Morfa, Nr Caernarfon

Runner Up: Mr Roger Ridgeway, Clovers Farm, Nr Haverfordwest

Finalists: Mr Andrew Owen, Pantygwial Nr Dihewyd

RESULTS – Grassland Management Competition

Winner: **South Caernarfonshire Grassland Society**
Mr Dylan Tudur Jones, Bryn-Rhydd Farm

A very worthy winner was Bryn-Rhydd, Edern, Pwllheli, the family farm of Dylan Tudur Jones a member of South Caernarfon Grassland Society. The 120 hectare (297 acres) farm carries 150 Holstein dairy cows, 143 followers and 205 ewes (pedigree Texel, Suffolk and Berrichion). The herd averages 9200 litres per cow with an impressive 4300 litres produced from grass and forage. Concentrate use is just over 2 tonnes per cow. The ewe flock produces 80 breeding rams for sale annually with the rest of the lambs sold as finished lambs.

Some 2500 tonnes of silage is made annually comprising of 1800 tonnes of clamped grass silage, 300 tonnes of grass silage in big bales and 400 tonnes of clamped whole crop silage. Maize was grown in the past, but no longer since it necessitates having land out of production for part of the year.

The farm has a South to South-West aspect and is some 120 feet above sea level on the northern coast of the Lleyn Peninsula and as such is prone to burning in dry years. Of the total farm area there are 39 hectares of wet land, which restricts the area for grazing, particularly during the wet years of 2007 and 2008. Some 24 hectares of good quality grass is rented in as grass keep.

A notable recent development has been the construction of 2.5 kilometre of cow tracks using construction stone and dust only (some 10, 000 tonnes in total), which has certainly improved the running of the farm.

Runner Up: **Brecon Grassland Society**
Mr Ken Morgan, Gorslwyd Farm

This is a 142 hectare upland beef and sheep farm at around 1000 feet above sea level within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Stocking comprised of 50 suckler cows and 900 ewes with some 45 younger cattle, 230 ewe lambs and 26 rams. Some of the Brecknock Hill Cheviot ewes are crossed with Blue-Faced Leicester. A notable feature is the fact that the farm supplies Marks and Spencer with Brecknock Hill Cheviot lambs, In fact Mr Morgan is one of the leading figures in this initiative. Silage, normally harvested towards mid-July is made in a clamp.

Finalists: **Cardigan Grassland Society**
Mr David Phillips, Trebared Farm

Cleddau Grassland Society
Mr Simon Richards, Little Hasguard Farm

Powys Grassland Society
Mr Ben Beddoes, Common Piece Farm

The All Wales Grassland Farming Competition is run in conjunction with the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society and sponsored by HSBC Bank. 2009 Judges were Bryn Edmonds, HSBC Bank, Emyr Jones (2008 Winner) and Lead Judge, Arthur Davies, IBERS.

LOCAL SOCIETY PROGRAMMES

2008-09 - PLEASE SEE FOLLOWING PAGE(s).

LOCAL SOCIETY PROGRAMMES: 2008-2009

ABERCONWY GRASSLAND SOCIETY

2008-2009 Not received.

ABERYSTWYTH GRASSLAND SOCIETY

2008:

HYDREF Joint meeting with Mid-Cardiganshire Grassland Society.
/OCTOBER Speaker: Prof. Wayne Powell, Director, IBERS (AU)
Venue: Ty Glyn Aeron.

TACHWEDD AGM & Talk by Mr Arwyn Owen, Farm Manager, Hafod-y-Llan
/NOVEMBER 'Grassland Management at Hafod Las - Trying to Combine
Conservation and Agriculture'.

RHAGFYR Conservation Night/Social Evening - *Courtesy of Wynnstay,*
/DECEMBER *Mr Bob Kodelski* - (a) Clamp Silage & Big Bale winners
(b) Beef Producer, (c) Hay Competition.
Venue: Penrhynoch Football Club.

2009:

IONAWR Farm Visit: Henllys, Dolybont – Mr Gerald Watkin.
/JANUARY

CHWEFROR 'Marketing Produce Outside the Farm Gate',
/FEBRUARY Mr Huw McConochie, Farms Manager, IBERS (AU).

ANGLESEY GRASSLAND SOCIETY

2008:

HYDREF Mona Tractors & John Deere
/OCTOBER 'History of Company & Cvernaland Diet Feeders'.

TACHWEDD 'Interest Rates'
/NOVEMBER Mark Lord, Lloyds TSB.

RHAGFYR Christmas Party, Buckley Beaumaris
/DECEMBER 'Da di Dil', Dilwyn Pierce.

2009:

IONAWR AGM & Competition Results
/JANUARY – Guests, Niel Matson, Elaine Joukes

CHWEFROR 'Economics Market Outlook, Welsh Beef & Lamb',
/FEBRUARY Emma Fotheringham, Market Analyst, HCC.

MAWRTH 'New Zealand' by Bedwyr Jones.
/MARCH

BETWS YN RHOS GRASSLAND SOCIETY

2008:

MAI
/MAY Visit to Grassland Demo, Stoneleigh.
Farm Visit – Courtesy of Mr Bown, Trywyn Farm,
Llanerchymedd, Anglesey.

MEDI
/SEPTEMBER 'HCC Promotion' – Lisa Evans.

HYDREF
/OCTOBER 'EID Project' – David Smith, Welsh Assembly

TACHWEDD
/NOVEMBER 'Lamb Selection' – Welsh Country Foods.
'Alternative Feeds' – Kenneth Wilson Feeds.

2009:

IONAWR
/JANUARY 'Alternative Crops' – Huw Powell, Grassland Development
Centre, IBERS (A.U.)

EBRILL
/APRIL 'Tour of Europe' - Rhys Davies, Nuffield Scholarship,
now HSBC Agric. Manager.

MEHEFIN
/JUNE Farm visit – Courtesy of Mr Charlie Whittingham,
Llanbedr Farm, Ruthin.

BRECON GRASSLAND SOCIETY

2008:

MAI
/MAY Farm walks - Blaenrheon, Penpont & Newton Farms, Scethrog.

MEHEFIN
/JUNE Farm walk - Cilwhybert Farm, Brecon

HYDREF
/OCTOBER Meeting & Speaker, Mr Grenville Ham,
'The Big Green Challenge'.

TACHWEDD
/NOVEMBER Joint meeting with Wye Valley Grassland Society.
Speaker: Wynnstay plc.

RHAGFYR
/DECEMBER Meeting & Speaker, Mr Rheinallt Williams, Tithebarn Limited.

2009:

IONAWR
/JANUARY AGM & members evening.

BRO DYFI GRASSLAND SOCIETY

2008:

HYDREF
/OCTOBER

AGM

TACHWEDD
/NOVEMBER

E.I.D. debate with Margaret Dalton (NSA) and Margaret Davies (NAW).

RHAGFYR
/DECEMBER

Silage Competition – sponsored by BOCM Pauls.
An evening with Bedwyr Jones, Gwastodanas - Presenting findings re Scholarship to New Zealand.

2009:

IONAWR
/JANUARY

Annual Dinner and Awards Evening.
Evening with Emyr Jones, Rhiwaedog
- Winner of UK Grassland Competition.

CHWEFROR
/FEBRUARY

Visit to Cwm Wythig and Cefn Mabws.
Evening with Lewis Owen, Oliver Seeds.

MAI/MAY

A Study Tour to Yorkshire – Incorporating a visit to BWMB, Bradford.

CARDIGAN AND DISTRICT GRASSLAND SOCIETY

2008:

HYDREF:
/OCTOBER

Countrywide Farmers Nutritionist, Jim Fordyce -
'Value for money feeds'

TACHWEDD
/NOVEMBER

Mark Mathias, Chapel Hill Camrose -
'Growth of our farming enterprise'.

Farm Visit – Host Aled Jones, Morlogws,
'Spring pasture presentation'.

RHAGFYR
/DECEMBER

Farm Visit & Talk 'Alternative Forage Crops',
Speaker – Chris Duller, IBERS (AU)
Host – Berwyn Lloyd, Pencwm.

2009:

IONAWR
/JANUARY

Hybu Cig Cymru/Welsh Meat Promotions
Speaker - Mark Needham, 'Meeting Market Requirements'.
Annual Dinner, Grosvenor – Speaker, Andrew Jones
Felindre Uchaf, Cwmann Nr Lampeter.

CHWEFROR
/FEBRUARY

Lloyd Jones, Clayshaw Butler & Euryd Jones, DHD Cardigan,
'Financial Planning'

MAWRTH
/MARCH

Richard Davies, DairyCo – 'Farm Building Design'
AGM

CARMARTHEN GRASSLAND SOCIETY

2008: Not received

CLEDDAU GRASSLAND SOCIETY

2008:

MAI/MAY Grassland Competition

MEHEFIN Farm Walk – Courtesy of Mr Howell Richards, Cwrtmalle Farm.
/JUNE

MEDI Grass Ley Competition
/SEPTEMBER

TACHWEDD ‘Making the Best Use of Slurry
/NOVEMBER Chris Duller, Grassland Development Centre, IBERS, A.U.
+ Silage Competition.

RHAGFYR ‘Golden Grove To-date’ - Lyn Richards, Gelli Aur College,
/DECEMBER Carms.

2009:

EBRILL AGM
/APRIL

MAI Grassland Competition
/MAY

EAST RADNOR GRASSLAND SOCIETY

2008:

MEDI Visit to Tyrells Potato Chip Factory.
/SEPTEMBER

HYDREF ‘Land Registry’ with Mr Mark Trow.
/OCTOBER

TACHWEDD ‘Managing Higher Fertilizer Costs’,
/NOVEMBER Charlie Morgan, Grassland Development Centre, IBERS, A.U.

RHAGFYR ‘Identifying Minerals’
/DECEMBER Speaker, Chris Williams, Medicrop

2009:

IONAWR Annual Dinner & Speaker,
/JANUARY Mr Gareth Wall, McCartneys.

CHWEFROR Joint Meeting with Knighton NFU and Director,
/FEBRUARY of NFU Cymru, Mary James.

GLAMORGAN GRASSLAND SOCIETY

2008:

IONAWR /JANUARY	Meeting with Mr Mike Donovan.
CWEFROR / FEBRUARY	Farm Visit to Trevithyn Farm, Llancarfan. Meeting with Mr H. Davies, Pumpsaint.
MAWRTH /MARCH	Quiz - Three Counties Quiz in Cowbridge. Joint Meeting with Farmers Club including - Mr Gareth Llewellyn ex Wales & British Lion.
HYDREF /OCTOBER	AGM, Cowbridge. Farm Walk Picton Castle Farm, Pembs & Cawdor House Farm, Wiston.
TACHWEDD /NOVEMBER	Meeting with Mr Aled Davies, Animas.
RHAGFYR /DECEMBER	Clamped & Wrapped Silage Competitions.
2009:	
IONAWR /JANUARY	Meeting with Keith Davies of Lydney Park Estates. Quiz – Three Counties, Cowbridge.

LLANGADOG GRASSLAND SOCIETY

2008-2009 Unavailable

MEIRIONNYDD GRASSLAND SOCIETY

2008-2009 Not received.

MID-CARDIGANSHIRE GRASSLAND SOCIETY

2008:

MEDI /SEPTEMBER	'My Farming System', Andrew Thomas, Abergwilli.
HYDREF /OCTOBER	'Brynhyfryd Holsteins', Michael & Rowland George. Open Meeting – Ty Glyn, Ciliau Aeron, Speaker, Prof. Wayne Powell, Director of IBERS, A.U.

TACHWEDD /NOVEMBER	Quiz Night (with WFF). 'A UK Survey on Healthy Cows Feet', Clare Maggs, Bristol Vet Group. Annual Dinner with Guest Speaker, Dan Downes, Barclays Bank.
RHAGFYR /DECEMBER	Silage Competition Results, Keith Evans, Mole Valley Farmers.
2009: IONAWR /JANUARY	'Tour of New Zealand', Rhodri Davies, Pontargwaddar. Joint Round Table Dinner – Richard Thomas, Cardigan Vets.
CHWEFROR /FEBRUARY	'My Farming System', Gerald Watkins – Henllys Farm, Clarach. Llanllyr Water – Patrick Gee.
MAWRTH /MARCH	AGM and Members Evening, Arwel Jones.

MONMOUTHSHIRE GRASSLAND SOCIETY

2008: MEHEFIN /JUNE	Judging - Grassland Farming Competition.
GORFFENNAF /JULY	Tour in Devon & Cornwall – Visits to an organic dairy farm, Duchy College Farm, beef & sheep farms. Members at BGS Summer Meeting (Holland), Incl. young member Ben Young sponsorship by MGS.
HYDREF: /OCTOBER	'Any Questions' - Evening with David Davies, MP. Usk Farmers Club – Chairman, Caroline Turner. Will Tulley, MRCVS & Dick Mason, Agric. Manager (Wales), Lloyds TSB.
TACHWEDD /NOVEMBER	'Beating Fertiliser Price Rises' – Charlie Morgan, GDC, IBERS, A.U. BGS sponsored meeting incl. Grassland Society members from Gloucester, Hereford, Glamorgan & Brecon.
RHAGFYR /DECEMBER	Clamp & Big Bale Silage Competitions Judge – Mr David Thomas.

2009: IONAWR /JANUARY	Members Dinner & Presentation of Awards.
CHWEFROR /FEBRUARY	'Farming in China', Sara Gregson.
EBRILL /APRIL	AGM

NARBERTH GRASSLAND SOCIETY

2008: HYDREF /OCTOBER	'Making the Most of Forage this Winter' BOCM Pauls, Camarthen.
TACHWEDD /NOVEMBER	'Looking to the Future', Mike John & Richard Davies, Fenton Vets
RHAGFYR /DECEMBER	Christmas Dinner & Speaker, John Lewis, Langdens Hook.

2009: IONAWR: /JANUARY	Visit to Bluestone Energy Centre.
CHWEFROR: /FEBRUARY	Discussion Panel at Nantyffin Motel, Llandissilio.
MAWRTH /MARCH	'Trace Elements' – Mr Goodwin Jones.
EBRILL /APRIL	AGM, Nantyffin Motel, Llandissilio.

NORTH PEMBROKESHIRE GRASSLAND SOCIETY

2008: HYDREF /OCTOBER	'Development of McHale Engineering', Mr Paul McHale
TACHWEDD /NOVEMBER	AGM
RHAGFYR /DECEMBER	'An Auctioneer's Tale – Mr Edward Perkins

2009:

IONAWR: /JANUARY	'Farming System Incorporating Genetics' 'Mr Mick Gould
CHWEFROR: /FEBRUARY	Business Enterprises – Dairy Farming, Agricultural Contracting and Building – Mr Martin Evans
MAWRTH /MARCH	Large Scale Dairy Farming in the 21 st Century Mr Mark Roach
EBRILL /APRIL	'Dairy Farming and Cheese-Making Enterprises' Mr Peter Willis Chairman's Trip – Various enterprises in Cumbria
MEHEFIN /JUNE	Walk – Dairy, Beef & Sheep Enterprises, Mr John Jenkins Day trip – Dairy enterprises, Mr David Gravell & Mr Hywel Richards.

POWYS GRASSLAND SOCIETY**2008:**

HYDREF /OCTOBER	'Bio-fuels for Wales' - Mr Llyr Jones, BML Biofuels Ltd
TACHWEDD /NOVEMBER	'National Sheep Association' – Mr Peter Morris, Chief Executive
RHAGFYR /DECEMBER	Forum Evening & Panel – HST Feeds, Barclays & Teme Valley Tractors.

2009:

IONAWR /JANUARY	Grass Silage Competition Mr Andrew Waterhouse, ME Waterhouse Feeds.
CHWEFROR /FEBRUARY	Calon Lan Functional Foods – Mr Geraint Hughes.
MAWRTH. /MARCH	'Block Calving Cows' with John Owen, Farm Manager, Gelli Aur College, Carmarthen.

SOUTH CAERNARFONSHIRE GRASSLAND SOCIETY

2008:

MAI/MAY	Grassland & Muck Event, Stoneleigh.
MEDI /SEPTEMBER	Farm Visit to Cae Geinach, Machynlleth, <i>Courtesy of Alwyn Rees & Family.</i>
HYDREF /OCTOBER	'Genus Services' – Arwel Owen, National Beef Sales Manager.
TACHWEDD /NOVEMBER	'Farming & the Retail Trade' – Gareth Jones, Farm Manager, Rhug Estates, Corwen.
RHAGFYR /DECEMBER	'John Deere Range of Machinery' – John & Bryn Jones, Mona Tractors, Llangefni, Chwilog.

2009:

IONAWR /JANUARY	'My Farming System' & 'New Zealand Visit' Bedwyr Jones, Gwastadanas, Beddgelert.
	Presentation of Silage Results.

UPPER SEVERN GRASSLAND SOCIETY

2008-2009	Not received.
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WYE VALLEY GRASSLAND SOCIETY

2008:

MEDI /SEPTEMBER	Talk on 'Fertiliser & Alternative Crops' by Mole Valley Farmers, Steve Price & Bryn Hughes.
	Study tour to Wisconsin, USA.
HYDREF /OCTOBER	Presentation by Chief Vet. Officer for Wales, Christianne Glossop 'An Update on Work and UK Disease Problems'.
	Talk on 'A Trip to America' by Eifion Lloyd
TACHWEDD /NOVEMBER	Joint meeting - Brecon Grassland Society & talk by Wynnstay Farmers, Chicory Use & Alternative Home Grown Crops.
	Trip to Pencefn Feeds, Tregaron – Lamb Feeds.
RHAGFYR /DECEMBER	Society Dinner. Talk on 'History of Builth Wells & Surrounding Area' by Mr Jim Davies & Mr Aubrey Price.

2009:

IONAWR
/JANUARY

Ladies Evening – ‘Filming in the Arctic & making programmes for BBC’ with Henrietta Kidston.

Talk on ‘Sun, Wind or Water – Where to get our future energy from?’
- Green Earth Energy.

CWEFROR
/FEBRUARY

Talk ‘From Working in the East End of London to Farming near Builth Wells’. By Mr John Kirk.

AGM.