



Talking turkey

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June marks the start of CALU's annual programme of talks, shows and events. One of the first events for us this year has been a workshop on seasonal turkey production.

As with most food products, the turkey, familiar with most consumers today is very different from that of only 20 or 30 years ago.

In the "good old days" turkeys were grown slowly, and mainly out of doors, taking around six months to reach killing weight.

These days, the bulk of turkeys are produced in intensive systems. These systems offer benefits in terms of hygiene, management and consistency of product, but they are not suitable for small scale producers.

By contrast, the traditional slow-grown, extensive systems, can be an ideal adjunct to the main farm business, providing welcome seasonal income in the depths of winter.

CALU's Seasonal Turkey Production workshops, funded through Farming Connect, brought together two of the UK's leading poultry experts to cover a diverse range of topics.

Alison Wintrip of ADAS explained the legislation surrounding turkey production and slaughter. Stressing the importance of registering flocks with more than 50 birds.

She also highlighted the importance of rodent control on turkey farms. Both rats and mice can carry salmonella. If

more than 500 birds are being kept, regular testing for salmonella will be required.

James Bentley, a breed expert from Heritage Turkeys, summarised the current state of the UK market for turkey meat. His advice was that as well as rearing a quality bird, seasonal producers need to work hard on marketing and building a relationship with their customers.

For further information on turkeys, take a look at CALU's introductory factsheet.. The Codes of Recommendations for the Welfare of Livestock—Turkeys, available from the Defra website, provides much useful information on best practice for turkey management.

CALU's subject areas:

- Horticulture
- Bio-energy
- Arable crops
- Non-food crops
- Alternative livestock

Henfaes Horticultural Masterclass

Plans are well under way for our first Horticultural Masterclass, to be held at Henfaes, nr Bangor on 7th October 2009.

This event will draw together experts from the horticulture sector to provide advice on: poly-tunnels; growing media; nutrients; raised bed production systems; vegetable seed production; and seed potato production.

Speakers already confirmed for the event

include:

- Ian Cannon from Link-a-bord;
- Andy Hardie from Nutrimate;
- Iain Barber from Jameson Brothers Potatoes;
- Mathew Harrison from Northen Polytunnels;
- Steve Hughes from Humax and
- Medwyn Williams from Medwyn's of Anglesey.

We hope that this will become a regular event in the calendar.

Pig health workshop

The north Wales Pig Producer group met at Glynllifon on 30th April to listen to a presentation by pig veterinarian Claudia .

Claudia's talk covered the principal ailments of pigs including endo and ecto parasites and swine influenza.

The talk was followed by a discussion on health issues the group have experienced in their herds, with large round worms being a topic of particular interest.

Discussions then turned to general issues relating to the health and welfare of pigs.

Following the meeting CALU has provided all members with a copy of the Defra booklet Pigs—code of recommendations for the welfare of livestock.

This booklet is available for free download from Defra's website (<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/welfare/farmed/pigs/pigcode.pdf>) and provides invaluable and clearly written guidance on both legal and best practice issues relating to pig husbandry. CALU strongly recommends that all those involved in pig production ensure that they are familiar with this booklet and its guidance.

As some members of the producer group are travelling a considerable distance from north east Wales. CALU is hoping to set up another group in the east. If you would be interested in joining this group, please let us know—see contact details on the back page of this newsletter.

DID YOU KNOW...

There are more than 500 species of aphid in the UK.

During the spring and summer aphids give birth to live young.

In the autumn they lay eggs which over-winter.

Bread with zero food miles (almost)

On the 19th of May, the first loaf of bread from wheat grown and stoneground at Henfaes was baked. And quickly eaten.

Milling grain is an excellent way to add value to it. Stone grinding is particularly good as it retains more of the flavour (and nutrients) than other processing methods.

(depending on how fine or coarse you grind the grain).

A small scale mill like this could be a real attraction for farms that sell through farmers markets or have bed and breakfast enterprises. Being able to advertise your scones or bread as being made from your own grain, ground on your own farm will definitely add value to them.

Furthermore, there is evidence that by grinding the flour as needed rather than storing it as flour, it is more nutritious. What's more, it is also more flavoursome.

DID YOU KNOW...

Although ASDA sales of "local" produce are up by 40%, they still represent less than 1% of all the produce sold in ASDA stores...



For CALU's first loaf, we milled the wheat in a SAMAP 500 grain mill. This is small enough to accommodate in an ordinary domestic kitchen, but powerful enough to produce reasonable quantities of flour. The manufacturers state that it has an output of between 200g and 500g per minute



How hardy is “hardy”

The winter of 2008-09 brought lower temperatures than we have seen for a long time. Mild winters have lulled many into a false sense of security. Plants that used to be thought of as too tender for our climate have been creeping into nurseries and gardens. Sadly, the winter's cold temperatures have damaged or even killed many of these more exotic plants.

So, what exactly does it mean if you classify a plant as hardy? Sadly, but not surprisingly, the answer isn't simple.

There are various classifications for hardiness, the three commonest are the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA); the Royal Horticultural Society's (RHS) and the European Garden Flora (EGF) classification.

All of these are based on minimum temperatures. The USDA system has 11 major divisions ranging from Zone 11 where the minimum average temperature never falls below 4.5°C to Zone 1 where the minimum average temperature is below a brain chilling -45.6°C.

The RHS system has only four divisions:

- Fully Hardy (H) – hardy to -15°C
- Frost Hardy (FH) – hardy to -5°C
- Half Hardy (HH) – hardy to 0°C
- Frost Tender (FT) – not hardy below 5°C

The EGF classification has five divisions (H1 to H5) between 0°C and -20°C and two glasshouse categories – G1 for unheated glass and G2 for plants that need the protection of a heated glasshouse.

However, most people will have noticed it isn't just the absolute temperature that causes frost damage. Consideration also needs to be given to the time of year the frost occurs; the accompanying weather conditions – an icy north east wind with a few degrees of frost can do more damage than a similar temperature on one still night; and the duration of the low temperature.

Furthermore, although our focus when talking about hardiness has related to minimum temperature hardiness, there are other factors that influence a plant's overall hardiness, for example seasonal water availability and its resistance to diseases. Caution always needs to be exercised when claiming a plant is “hardy” and when specifying or buying plants.

DID YOU KNOW...

There are two main types of frost:

Rime frost is the more common feathery white frost

Hoar frost is a hard transparent frost formed when a film of water freezes.

Rhubarb, rhubarb, rhubarb

Rhubarb is always one of the crops which attracts a lot of interest at CALU events. Rhubarb is a relatively undemanding plant. It grows best in a site that is free from shade, and in particularly cold, heavy soils, it will benefit from being planted in a bed or a mound.

The principle method of propagation is by division of crowns. These are planted out in November (or March, if November wasn't possible).

Although rhubarb is relatively problem free, slugs can devastate young plants and crown rot, a fungal disease, can quickly

destroy a crop. Although eaten as a fruit rhubarb is classified as a vegetable as it is the leaf stem (petiole) which is eaten and not the fruit. This means for management purposes the crop is treated as a leaf crop, not a fruit, and Nitrogen is the critical element.

Traditionally, and with great success, farm yard manure was the choice source for providing Nitrogen (and other nutrients) to rhubarb crops.

Forced rhubarb is a speciality crop produced by growing crowns in total darkness. Although forced rhubarb can command a premium price, it

requires intensive labour input. It also quickly exhausts the crowns, whereas outdoor rhubarb will keep on cropping for many years.

Careful choice of varieties means that a rhubarb crop can be harvested out of doors from as early as February right through until the autumn.

CALU is producing a factsheet on rhubarb, this will be available soon.

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Supporting sustainable land use in Wales



Forthcoming Events

Tuesday 9th June — Producing Glasshouse Ornamentals (morning); Quality Assurance in Horticulture (afternoon), Springfield (Llandow) Ltd, Cowbridge, CF71 7PA

Tuesday 16th June - Seasonal Turkey Production Workshop, Nant y Ffin Motel, Clynderwen, SA66 7SU

Wednesday 17th June— Seasonal Turkey Production Workshop, Henfaes Research Centre, Abergwyngregyn, nr Bangor, LL33 0LB

Wednesday 1st July—Successful Cereal Production in a Tough Climate, Henfaes Research Centre, Abergwyngregyn, nr Bangor, LL33 0LB

Monday 20th—Thursday 23rd July —Royal Welsh Agricultural Show—visit us in the Countryside Care Area

Wednesday 29th July —Cardigan County Show

Friday 7th August—Fishguard Show

Tuesday 11th and Wednesday 12th August—Anglesey Show

Friday 14th August—Henfaes Potato Day

Wednesday 19th August—Vale of Glamorgan Show

Wednesday 26th August—Meirionnydd Show

Friday 14th August—Potato event—Henfaes, LL33 0LB

Thursday 17th August—Monmouthshire Show

In the pipeline we are planning: vineyard management workshops; cider production workshops; stubble management workshops; and many more.

About CALU

CALU delivers the Farming Connect Knowledge Transfer Development Programme for Land Management. The programme provides information to any business in Wales that is interested in:

- Horticulture
- Bio-energy
- Alternative Livestock
- Arable Crops
- Non-food Crops

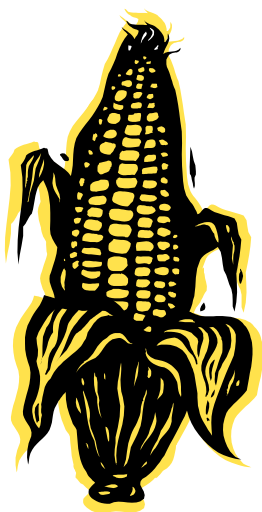
CALU has three dedicated members of staff and a network of associate specialists covering all the topics within CALU's remit.

CALU ACTIVITIES:

- Open days
- Demonstration events
- Technical leaflets
- Training days
- Press articles
- Crop information sheets
- Project reports
- Talks
- Producer groups
- Agricultural shows
- Information booklets

CALU PARTNERS:

- University of Wales, Bangor
- Welsh College of Horticulture
- ADAS
- Coed Cymru
- Coleg Llysfasi



Cronfa Amaethyddol Ewrop ar gyfer Datblygu Gwledig
Ewrop yn Buddsoddi mewn Ardalau Gwledig
The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
Europe Investing in Rural Areas

