

## DEMONSTRATING ALTERNATIVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR WELSH FARMERS

During 2006 the Centre for Alternative Land Use (CALU) will once again be demonstrating the use of alternative or novel crops at sites across Wales.

The potential exists for farmers in Wales to produce a variety of products, ranging from high value food, to energy crops for use in biomass burners. CALU's demonstration sites show just a few of the options available.

This year there will be demonstration sites in Gwynedd, Flintshire, Monmouthshire and Carmarthenshire. The crops being grown include:

- ~ Hemp: a dwarf variety which can be grown either for oil rich seed or for fibre.
- ~ Sweet corn: to demonstrate that corn of a high quality can be grown for human consumption even in North Wales.
- ~ Parsnips: demonstrations of a short rooting variety suitable for large scale growing on stony Welsh soils.
- ~ Lupins for high quality animal feed
- ~ Sarpoblight resistant potatoes which are ideal for organic systems, or any grower concerned about the high levels for inputs on conventional potato crops.
- ~ Naked oats for animal feed or the cosmetic industry.

Contracts already exist for many of these alternative crops within Wales and they represent only a small number of the wide range of options available to Welsh farmers. It is already known that a variety of fibre, fuel and oil seed crops such as flax, Miscanthus, Echim and Calendula can be successfully grown in Welsh conditions.

The demand for locally produce fruit and vegetables and for non-food products such as seed oils and energy crops is increasing. This provides an ideal opportunity for Welsh farmers to realise the benefits available from diversification.

The uptake of novel and high value crops will only be successful and can only be encouraged if the relevant processing and marketing tools exist. A grower's ability to recognise and exploit available markets and 'value adding' processing options is fundamental to successful diversification.

CALU will be running a number of events at each of the four sites throughout 2006 – see local press for details.

---

### Notes for editors:

Trial sites are: Henfaes Research Centre, Abergwyngregyn  
Welsh College of Horticulture, Northop  
Coleg Gwent, Usk  
Rose Cottage Farm, Milford Haven

CALU is one of the five Farming Connect Development Centres across Wales.

CALU is a partnership between University of Wales Bangor (UWB), College of Welsh Horticulture, Coed Cymru, ADAS Wales Ltd and Coleg Llysfasi. UWB is the lead partner.

For further information contact CALU on 01248 680450 or email [calu@bangor.ac.uk](mailto:calu@bangor.ac.uk)