

## HORTICULTURE WALES

The Horticulture Strategy for Wales, launched in 2002, reviewed the composition and distribution of the Horticulture Sector across Wales and identified five key priorities which would support the future development and sustainability of the Sector:

- Development of a long term vision for a sustained horticulture sector in Wales
- Improvement of the technical business and management performance of the sector
- Evaluation of existing and development of new marketing initiatives for the Welsh horticulture sector
- Integration of the support infrastructure to the horticulture sector in Wales
- Evaluation of the education and training needs of the horticulture sector

As part of the strategy to address these issues, the Centre for Alternative Land Use (CALU) was established in November 2004 and horticulture is one of five key areas addressed by CALU.

CALU's horticultural activities are mainly delivered through the Welsh College of Horticulture, with support from ADAS. The remit is to provide advice and guidance to the sector and to undertake technology transfer activities developing research findings into commercial practice. CALU, in conjunction with the Welsh College of Horticulture, offers a comprehensive service of support for all horticulture in Wales.

This year, CALU's horticultural demonstration projects are looking at:

- field scale horticultural crops with proven markets;
- blight resistant potatoes to reduce chemical inputs in food production;
- the use of Caliente mustard to control wireworms – an expanding pest of potato crops; and
- strategies for producing high quality pot herbs for the culinary market.

Throughout the summer open days will be held at the project sites. Contact [CALU@bangor.ac.uk](mailto:CALU@bangor.ac.uk) or 01248 680450 for further information.

CALU also funds two very active horticultural discussion groups. Discussion groups provide the opportunity for local producers to join together to share ideas, solve problems and develop a stronger market presence. The Carmarthenshire Growers Group has recently launched a website to promote its members produce ([www.carmarthenshiregrowers.co.uk](http://www.carmarthenshiregrowers.co.uk)). If you are interested in setting up a horticultural discussion group, please contact CALU.

Another way in which CALU helps horticultural producers is through the provision of Technical Advice under the Farming Connect programme. Recent reports produced for growers have covered issues ranging from asparagus production to integrated pest management. For further information on technical advice contact CALU or the Farming Connect Service Centre 0845 6000 813.