



WOODCHIP

for Livestock Bedding Project

Trefor and Enid Parry
Bodgaeaf Isaf, Bryn Croes,
Pwllheli

The Woodchip for Livestock Bedding Project was initiated to investigate the potential of using woodchip as an alternative to straw as indoor bedding for sheep and cattle. From January to March 2006 cattle and sheep were housed on woodchip at three development sites, ADAS Pwllpeiran, IGER Aberystwyth and Glynllifon College. During this housing period similar groups were also housed on straw and comparisons were made of their feed intakes, growth rates, cleanliness and health. Assessments were also made of the time and labour requirements for using woodchip in comparison to straw.

An additional part to the project is to determine how best to utilise the woodchip after animals have been bedded on it. Composting studies are being carried out by Bangor University to investigate how the woodchip breaks down and the nutrient value of the end product. The project will also investigate the potential to reuse the woodchip as bedding after it has been composted. Glynllifon College will demonstrate this in February 2007.

Eleven demonstration farms have been set up across Wales to allow farmers to view the project on a local basis. Either cattle or sheep will be housed on these farms for an 8-10 week period on both woodchip and straw. Assessments will be made of the health,



welfare, growth and cleanliness of the animals as well as the labour required for the two systems. Full costings will be given, as the economies of using woodchip will be an important consideration for farmers. Trefor and Enid Parry are part of this demonstration farm network and below is a description of their farm enterprises and how woodchip fits into this.

Sheep

Trefor and Enid are very aware of the importance of genetic improvement to increase their margins and this policy is evident in their sheep flock. They have 550 Mule x Texel ewes which they breed themselves by crossing a high index Texel ram onto a proportion of Mule ewes. The rest of the flock is mated to high index Suffolk rams, producing lambs that finish early and have excellent conformation characteristics. The flock lambs from mid February to mid March and in 2006 seventy five percent of the lambs were finished off the ewes in June. The remaining lambs were also finished off grass before the end of the November.

Cattle

Following the purchase of a Stabiliser bull the suckler cows at Bodgaeaf Isaf are gradually being changed from Welsh Black to cows with a stronger Stabiliser influence. To facilitate this change all females are being put to the Stabiliser bull with the intention of keeping the

best 40 cows. Stabilisers were chosen for their ease of management, docility and fertility; important considerations as Trefor and Enid work off the farm on a full time basis. Trefor was particularly pleased that of 30 cows put to the bull in July 2005, 28 of them calved in April 2006. The progeny produced are finished indoors at approximately 18 months of age together with an additional 40 stores that are bought in.

Woodchip

The cattle were housed on the woodchip on the 14th August, due to a shortage of grazing, whereas the cattle on straw were kept outside until mid September. They are all fed big bale silage and a pelleted finishing ration. Trefor has been using woodchip for 5 years and finds it an excellent and cheap alternative to straw. When the animals are housed he starts with a layer of woodchip, four inches deep and applies fresh material twice a week. The front of the sheds are scraped clean twice a week and the material is stored on a muckheap in the field. After 12 months this muck is spread on the grassland. The three main advantages Trefor finds with the woodchip compared to the straw are:

- price
- cleanliness of the animals
- labour saving, as the animals needed to be bedded more frequently on straw to maintain cleanliness.

Farm Facts

- 95 hectares of grassland, 43 hectares of which, is rented
- 550 Mule x Texel ewes
- 38 suckler cows (all calves finished at approx 18 months)
- 40 store cattle bought and finished each year

Prosiect NADDION PREN

ar gyfer Gwasarn Da Byw

Trefor ac Enid Parry
Bodgaeaf Isaf, Bryn Croes,
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Cychwynnwyd y Prosiect Naddion Pren ar gyfer Gwasarn Da Byw er mwyn ymchwilio i botensial defnyddio naddion pren yn lle gwellt yn wasarn dan do i ddefaid a gwartheg. O fis Ionawr tan fis Mawrth 2006 cadwyd gwartheg a defaid dan do ar naddion pren mewn tri safle datblygu, sef ADAS Pwllpeiran, IGER Aberystwyth a Choleg Glynllifon. Yn ystod y cyfnod hwn cadwyd grwpiau cyffelyb dan do hefyd ar wellt a gwnaed cymariaethau â'u cymeriant bwyd, cyfraddau twf, glendid ac iechyd. Yn ogystal, aseswyd y gofynion amser a llafur wrth ddefnyddio naddion pren mewn cymhariaeth â gwellt.

Rhan arall o'r prosiect yw penderfynu sut orau i ddefnyddio'r naddion pren ar ôl ei ddefnyddio'n wasarn. Mae astudiaethau gwrteithio'n cael eu cynnal gan Brifysgol Bangor er mwyn darganfod sut mae naddion pren yn dadelfennu a darganfod gwerth maethol y cynnyrch terfynol. Bydd y prosiect hefyd yn ymchwilio i'r potensial o aildefnyddio'r naddion pren yn wasarn ar ôl iddyn nhw gael eu gwrteithio. Bydd Coleg Glynllifon yn arddangos hyn ym mis Chwefror 2007.

Cafodd un ar ddeg o ffermydd arddangos eu sefydlu ledled Cymru fel bod gan ffermwyr gyfle i weld y prosiect yn lleol. Bydd naill ai gwartheg neu ddefaid yn cael eu cadw dan do ar y ffermydd hyn am gyfnod o rhwng wyth a deng wythnos ar naddion pren a gwellt. Asesir

FFEITHIAU AM Y FFERM

- 95 hectar o dir glas, gan gynnwys 43 hectar sy'n cael eu rhentu
- 550 o famogiaid Miwl x Texel
- 38 o fuchod sugno (pesgi'r holl loi oddeutu 18 mis oed)
- 40 o wartheg stôr yn cael eu prynu a'u pesgi bob blwyddyn



iechyd, lles, twf a glendid yr anifeiliaid yn ogystal â'r gwaith sydd ynghlwm â'r naill system a'r llall. Rhoddir y costau llawn, oherwydd bydd y gost o ddefnyddio naddion pren yn ystyriaeth bwysig i ffermwyr. Mae Trefor ac Enid Parry yn rhan o'r rhwydwaith o ffermydd arddangos ac isod gwelir disgrifiad o'r mentrau fferm a sut mae naddion pren yn rhan o hyn.

Defaid

Mae Trefor ac Enid yn ymwybodol iawn o bwysigrwydd gwelliant genetig i wella'u helw ac mae'r polisi'n amlwg yn eu diadell. Mae ganddynt 550 o famogiaid Miwl x Texel sy'n cael eu bridio ar y fferm trwy groesi hwrdd Texel â mynegrif uchel â chyfran o'r mamogiaid Miwl. Mae gweddill y ddiadell yn cael hyrddod Suffolk â mynegrif uchel, gan gynhyrchu wŷn sy'n pesgi'n gynnar ac sydd â nodweddion cydffurfiad rhagorol. Mae'r ddiadell yn wyna o ganol Chwefror tan ganol Mawrth, ac yn 2006 gorffennwyd pesgi 75% o'r wŷn yn ym mis Mehefin. Gorffennwyd pesgi'r wŷn yn eraill hefyd ar borfa cyn diwedd Tachwedd.

Gwartheg

Ar ôl prynu tarw Stabiliser, mae'r buchod sugno ym Modgaeaf Isaf yn cael eu newid yn raddol o fuchod Duon Cymreig i fuchod â mwy o ddylanwad Stabiliser. Er mwyn hwyluso'r newid hwn, mae'r holl wartheg benyw'n cael tarw Stabiliser gyda'r bwriad o gadw'r 40 o fuchod gorau. Dewiswyd teirw Stabiliser am

eu bod yn hawdd eu rheoli, yn ddoe a ffrwythlon, sef ystyriaethau pwysig am fod Trefor ac Enid yn gweithio'n llawn-amser ar y fferm. Roedd Trefor yn falch iawn fod 28 o'r 30 o fuchod a gafodd darw ym mis Gorffennaf 2005 wedi lloia ym mis Ebrill 2006. Mae'r epil sy'n cael eu cynhyrchu'n cael eu pesgi dan do pan fyddant oddeutu 18 mis oed ynghyd â 40 o anifeiliaid stôr sy'n cael eu prynu.

Naddion Pren

Cafodd y gwartheg ar naddion pren eu rhoi dan do ar 14 Awst, oherwydd prinder glaswellt, ond cafodd y gwartheg ar wellt eu cadw allan tan ganol Medi. Mae'r holl anifeiliaid yn cael eu bwydo â silwair o fyrnau mawr a phelenni pesgi. Mae Trefor yn defnyddio naddion pren ers pum mlynedd ac o'r farn eu bod yn ddewis rhagorol a rhad yn lle gwellt. Pan fo'r anifeiliaid yn cael eu rhoi dan do mae Trefor yn dechrau â haenen o naddion pren, pedair modfedd o ddyfnder, ac yn rhoi naddion ffres ddwywaith yr wythnos. Caiff tu blaen y siediau eu crafu'n lân ddwywaith yr wythnos a chaiff y carthion eu cadw mewn tomen yn y cae. Ar ôl 12 mis caiff y tail ei wasgar ar y tir glas. Yn ôl Trefor, y tri phrif fantais o ddefnyddio naddion pren mewn cymhariaeth â gwellt yw:

- pris
- glendid yr anifeiliaid
- arbed gwaith, oherwydd mae angen rhoi gwellt yn amlach o dan yr anifeiliaid i'w cadw'n lân.

I gael rhagor o wybodaeth, cysylltwch â:

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