

# Kingshay

## Independent Dairy Specialists



### SOUTH WEST DAIRY DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

October saw the grand opening of our state-of-the-art dairy unit. Lord and Lady Bathurst opened the centre in front of an audience of 150 guests to mark the official launch of the facility. The following day, we welcomed a further 120 visitors to our farmer open day, to coincide with the Royal Bath and West Agricultural Society Dairy Show.

Designed, developed and operated by Kingshay, the South West Dairy Development Centre is an asset of the AgriEPI Centre, one of four agtech centres established with funding through Innovate UK to reinvigorate innovation in UK agriculture. EPI stands for Engineering, Precision, Innovation - and the dairy certainly embraces all of those with robotic milking for 180 cows, automatic feeding with an overhead system that is currently feeding the cows 17 times a day to keep the ration at peak freshness, robotic scraping and sensor-controlled curtain walling to optimise ventilation.

A key element of the development is precision grazing. Cow tracks are being built this winter to give the cows access to the grazing platform next Spring. Using an A, B and C zone system, the cows will gain access to fresh grazing every 8-hours and are free to return to the building as and when they want to be milked.

The objective is to establish a commercial herd and system that presents a vision for the future of milk production, while providing a platform for research and development.

For example, Milkalyser is using our robot milkers to test and refine their prototype in-line progesterone testing sensors, to provide vital information on each cows' oestrus status. Other emerging prototype technology is lined up to be tested over the coming months, including a novel footbath filter.



The dairy is one of three test beds for the 5G Rural First project, which is exploring the potential of the next generation of mobile signal to massively improve connectivity for farming and rural communities ([www.5gruralfirst.org](http://www.5gruralfirst.org)).

We have three particular cases on the farm for this project: using 5G to read the Afimilk Silent Herdsman sensors on the cows' collars; Virtual Vet, which is providing novel connected Smart Posts which responds to voice requests for information on, for example, an individual cow. These are supported by an augmented reality system to give "heads up" data and information. The third case is hyper-spectral imaging of our grassland to tell us both the quantity and feed quality of the grazing. All examples of leading edge emerging tech that our facility will help to make a reality on your farm in the not too distant future.

# News

## January 2019

#### IN THIS ISSUE

- South West Dairy Development Centre news
- Understanding yourself and others
- Welcome Tom Bell
- EuroDairy visit Somerset

Our thanks go to our major sponsors Barbers, ForFarmers, Galebreaker Agri, GEA and Zoetis, who have provided funding to enable us to build a superb visitor facility. Watch this space for news of our open day in the Spring!

If you have a group that would like to visit, please get in touch with Duncan on [duncan.forbes@kingshay.co.uk](mailto:duncan.forbes@kingshay.co.uk)



## UNDERSTANDING YOURSELF AND OTHERS TO MAKE BETTER STAFF MANAGEMENT DECISIONS

The Wyvern Discussion Group, which has been run by Kingshay for over 15 years, recently met for their first meeting of the 18/19 Season. Looking for something a little bit different, Sarah Bolt, who has of late taken over the facilitation role, invited Paul Harris from Real Success to look at the important topic of Communication and Developing your Team.

Many farmers encounter difficulties in both finding the right staff and then retaining them within the farm team. Paul has bought an innovative approach from outside the industry, to help farmers make better staff management decisions.

Paul explained that by understanding your own personality, you can better understand how you communicate with others, not only from a business point of view, but also communication within the family. This leads to an enhanced understanding of team dynamics and how different personalities may perceive one other. Ultimately, this leads to improved communications to get the best from the team and to drive the business forward.

There was a little scepticism at the start of the meeting, but any doubts subsided as Paul took the group through his

unique VITA Profiling System. The meeting was undoubtedly filled with enthusiastic discussion.

Feedback from the day has been really positive with attendees sharing their thoughts:

- "Great meeting last Friday! "G" and I are still mulling it over."
- "Many thanks for organising last weeks' meeting. "M" and I found the session with Paul very enlightening and entertaining. I think we both are in a position of far greater understanding of the way we act and react. Very positive and useful."
- "We got so much from the session, we have already booked Paul to come on farm and work with our whole team."

Paul Harris works with many farming businesses across the country and describes himself as a "Labour Consultant". For farming clients with staff management challenges, Paul Harris and Real Success could be part of the solution.

For further details, visit [www.real-success.co.uk](http://www.real-success.co.uk)



FEBRUARY

6

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Following the success of last years' Dairy Tech Show, Kingshay will once again be exhibiting this year. Dairy Tech will take place on Wednesday 6th February 2019 at Stoneleigh Park, if you are attending the event, we invite you to come and visit our stand.



## MILKSURE – REDUCING THE RISK OF COSTLY RESIDUE FAILURES

The MilkSure initiative, led by Dairy UK, is a training course developed for farmers and their employees, in conjunction with the BCVA (British Cattle Veterinary Association) to maintain milk production free of medicine residues.

Routine testing, undertaken by all milk purchasers, discovered antibiotics to be the most common medicine residue found in milk. Not only can these failures be costly to the farmer, but with the increased pressure of antimicrobial resistance, the production of wholesome milk is in everyone's interest throughout the supply chain, from the farmer to the consumer.

Reducing the risk of residues in milk whilst using veterinary medicines effectively, is the aim of the MilkSure training. Working with your vet, the course takes around three hours. Maximum benefit is gained when the whole milking team is involved, assessing the farm to identify the main risks for residues and finding the best

solutions for avoiding these hazards on your farm.

Following completion of the training, a short on-line test must be passed, before being awarded a Certificate of Achievement so the farm can attain MilkSure accreditation. Completing the course complies with Red Tractor Standards and awards seven DairyPro points.

The development of course materials was sponsored by Dairy Crest, Arla Foods UK, Müller Milk and Ingredients, AHDB Dairy, Zoetis UK and MSD Animal Health. National Milk Laboratories and RUMA contributed technical input.

Confirm your dedication to producing residue free milk by achieving MilkSure accreditation, visit [www.milksure.co.uk](http://www.milksure.co.uk)

## RECENT MAILINGS

Twice a month, Kingshay's farmer, consultant and vet members receive Insight publications and a Monthly Checklist and have access to previous ones in the members' area of the website at [www.kingshay.com](http://www.kingshay.com). Here are some highlights from those produced in recent months:

## AMMONIA EMISSIONS

As the biggest agricultural contributor to UK ammonia emissions, dairy farmers are under increasing pressure to improve air quality.





## EURODAIRY VISIT TO SOMERSET

This week saw Kingshay host a two-day EuroDairy meeting of UK and Irish producers focussing on 'Resilience and Innovation'. The group started their tour of Somerset visiting the Alvis Family, farmers and cheesemakers at Lyecross Farm. Led by Johnny and Jo Alvis, along with Richard Searle, the group toured the main dairy unit; an excellent example of an efficient milk production system. Resilience was clearly demonstrated across the whole farming business, which includes 1,200 dairy cows, of which 250 are organic, replacement youngstock and beef production. Cropping comprises of grass, maize, wheat, barley, oats and oilseed rape across a total of 4,300 acres.

The visit encompassed a tour of the new Agri-EPI South West Dairy Development Centre, run by Kingshay, which combines state-of-the-art, high welfare cow housing and robotic milking facilities with precision grazing. This stimulated discussion around the role of innovation and technology as a source of farms' adaptive capacity and resilience.

A workshop session led by Kingshay's Richard Simpson and Sarah Bolt explored the attributes of a resilient farmer and investigated current European Dairy Farmer (EDF) Cost of Production figures to see what can be learnt from existing

data. As well as an exercise to develop a risk management strategy to improve business resilience.

The second day started with Patty Clayton, Senior Analyst with AHDB, leading a debate on 'Brexit: challenging resilience'. Without a doubt, Brexit will disrupt 'business as usual' for dairy farmers, and potentially, not only in the UK, which proved to be of much interest to the Irish visitors.

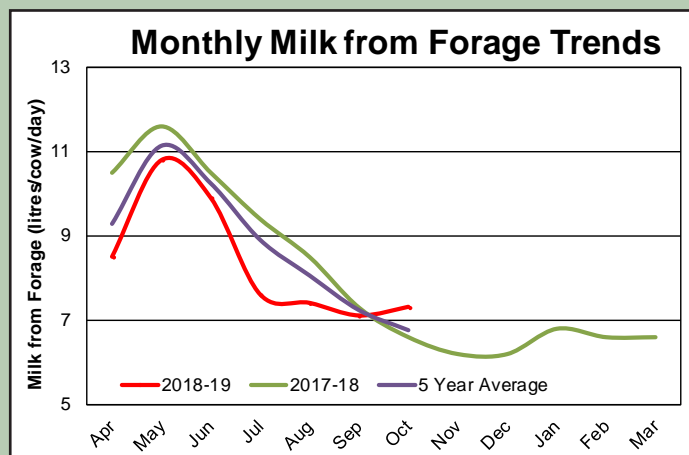
A visit to Steanbow Farms concluded the meeting, with Neil and Mike Christensen sharing their EDF Cost of Production figures for their 600 high yielding dairy cows. Keeping with the topic of resilience, the Christensen's shared with the visitors how their focus on herd health and fertility is key to a resilient business.

Also, how they have gained efficiencies by moving to a flying herd and growing Lucerne, to improve cropping rotations and provide a further source of home-grown protein.



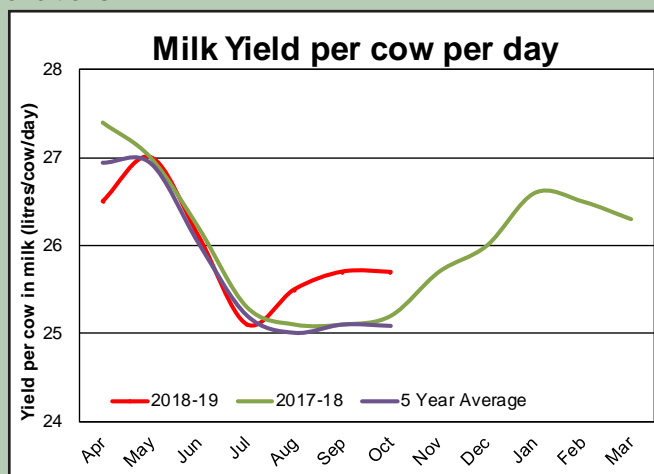
## DAIRY MANAGER PRODUCTION REVIEW

Everyone in the industry will be only too aware of the difficulties presented by 2018 in respect of forage production and utilisation. Following the late winter and hot summer, the combination of late turnout and restricted grazing meant milk from forage levels were challenged, but by how much?



Early autumn results from Dairy Manager show that there was a considerable shortfall in milk from forage against last year through May, June, July and August, accumulating to over 130 litres less per cow. More recently, daily levels have recovered, and we are now at parity with both last year and the 5-year average. Current trends suggest that levels may even improve against previous years in the coming months.

For many, the lower forage stock levels have driven decisions to offload culls and poorer performers earlier than normal to help stretch feed stocks. In these cases, the remaining herd consists of stronger performers being fed good quality forages often combined with increased levels of purchased feeds to cover the forage shortfall. This is certainly borne out in the "milk per cow per day" figures where we are over half a litre per cow per day ahead of both last year and the 5-year average. We will monitor how this develops over the winter, influenced by forage availability and changing market conditions.



## WELCOME ASSOCIATE CONSULTANT - TOM BELL

Tom recently established himself as an independent farm management consultant covering the South of England and South Wales, providing consultancy to both dairy and beef sectors, ranging from high input to low input and also organic production.

Tom grew up on a dairy farm in Somerset and studied at Harper Adams University. He went on to manage a number of block calving grass based dairy units in the UK and New Zealand. Later moving into dairy consultancy approximately 10 years ago, he is also involved in a mixed farming business, providing a practical perspective to his clients.

Tom's areas of expertise are in:

- Full farm business financial and technical performance appraisals
- Enterprise budgeting and cashflows
- Strategic business advice and securing finance
- Ruminant nutrition from low input to high input system
- Grass & forage utilisation and feed budgeting
- Milk production forecasting
- Dairy cow housing & cow comfort trouble shooting
- Qualified Lely robot advisor
- FACTS qualified advisor providing fertiliser advice & plans
- TBAS advisor providing TB advice
- Qualified LEAN farm management consultant



Are you unsure what direction to take your business post Brexit? Or is the dairy herd not performing this winter and cash is getting tight? If you would like a fresh face to help review and develop your business, Tom would be happy to provide an initial free on farm visit.

**Products & Analysis**

Independent Dairy Specialists



AVAILABLE:  
Feed & Forage Analysis  
Soil & Manure Analysis  
Drinking Water Analysis  
Plate Meters  
Soil & Sludge Sampling Tools



www.kingshay.com

## KINGSHAY PRODUCTS & SERVICES

We offer a full range of analysis services and sampling tools with discounted prices for our Kingshay Members.

Matching your animal's requirements with nutrient supply is key to maximising production. Analysing feed, forage and water is a crucial factor as quality can be extremely variable year on year, as well as from farm to farm.

The results of the analysis can be used to inform your decisions, meeting the needs of your farm.

## BEEF ANTIMICROBIAL REPORTING

Working with our vet colleagues within the group, we have developed a new report to help beef producers evaluate the level of antimicrobial use within their herd, to allow them to comply with Red Tractor regulations and facilitate a proactive discussion with their vet.

Following the same principle as our Dairy Antimicrobial Reports, these reports analyse medicine usage in detail for the last 12 months, compared to the previous year and industry targets set by RUMA.

For more details contact Kathryn Rowland on 01458 851555 or via email [dairy.manager@kingshay.co.uk](mailto:dairy.manager@kingshay.co.uk).



## COMING SOON KINGSHAY'S YEAR PLANNER

Look out for our Kingshay designed Year Planner in December's edition of British Dairying and our next mailing. If you would like further copies, please call the office on 01458 851555.

## FORAGE COSTINGS REPORT 2019

We will shortly be publishing our updated forage costings report, which provides a detailed insight into the costs of producing forage. Using the report will enable you to compare the cost of different forages and their relative value, benchmarked against soya and wheat.



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