

New Entrants to Farming Programme



**Farm
Advisory
Service**

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Case Study

Andrew and Lorna Prentice



“Persistence pays.

If serious, you need to commit.

Save money as soon as you can to build capital. If you get the chance of seasonal / temporary grazing, take it as it'll give you a start.”

Committed to a big move gives a young family a farming opportunity

A short biog...

Andrew and Lorna Prentice took on a new challenge in September 2013 when they moved from a 90 acre unsecured tenancy at Floors Farm, Stonehaven to a 240 acre tenancy on the picturesque Isle of Iona.

Andrew, Lorna and their children John and Kelsie gained an initial 5 year tenancy with the National Trust of Scotland for Maol & St Columba Farm. The farm is made up of 70 acres of improved grassland and 170 acres of rough grazing. The family currently run 200 head of pure Scottish Blackface females. In addition, Andrew also now poses as the island mechanic and helps crofters with contracting work, while Lorna works in the local hotel.

The family ran Blackface ewes at Stonehaven but felt they needed more land to warrant farming and something with more security for their family.

They applied for numerous tenancies, going through the tendering process and reaching numerous interviews but kept hitting one major stumbling block - capital.

However, they knew what they wanted, willing to relocate and kept trying.

What financial & advisory support have you received?

Andrew and Lorna completed the business plan and budgets themselves for the tenancy, this helped ensure they understood the figures in preparation for any questions at interview. A consultant looked over the plan for accuracy prior to submission.

‘Don’t be scared to ask questions of local farmers, an advisor, vet, accountant etc - they are there to help.’ reminds Andrew.

What hurdles have you had to overcome?

The main hurdle for the family has been the lack of opportunity to gain a secure tenancy. Luckily they were open to relocating to fulfil their goal.

What financial & advisory assistance have you received?

Andrew and Lorna completed the business plan and budgets themselves for the tenancy, this was to ensure they understood all of the figures in preparation for any questions at the interview. A consultant looked over these figures for accuracy prior to the business plan being submitted.

Prior to moving to the Isle of Iona, Andrew and Lorna attended the New Entrants to Farming workshops.

The couple have not as yet received any Single Farm Payment or LFA payments.

What is your main motivation to farm?

To breed the best animal they can and be successful in the sales and show rings. To build a rural family life for the children.

“Persistence Pays”

Andrew and Lorna Prentice



What advice would you give to someone thinking of entering the industry?

To any other new entrant, the couple's advice is to save money as soon as you can to build on capital. If you are offered seasonal temporary grazing take it, as it gives you a start to build your enterprises and finally persistence pays off!

What are your future ambitions?

To increase the flock and possibly introduce some cattle. The main driver for Andrew is to achieve success at the Highland Show with his Blackfaces, ultimately a top three placing and to top the local mart with their breeding females.

New Entrants to Farming “get with the” Programme

There is a network of new entrants across the country at various stages of developing their businesses. You can join in:

- www.facebook.com/NewEntrants
- www.fas.scot/new-entrants/
- Regional workshops

For more info contact Kirsten Williams, Consultant, SAC Consulting, Clifton Road, Turriff, 01888 563333, Kirsten.Williams@sac.co.uk

There are useful free resources on the website too:

- Case studies—learning from the experiences of other new entrants.
- Guidance notes—benefit from advice tailored to assist new entrants to farming.
- Also see www.gov.scot/Topics/farmingrural/Agriculture/NewEntrantsToFarming