Final Report FRM

Contents:

1. PROJECT TITLE/APPLICANT

1.1 Title. Farmers in the Field Video Case Studies
1.2 Overview lead company/organisation and project partners. Forth Resource Management

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 Overview *(maximum 2 pages)* – inc.:

- Aim(s)/purpose;

  - Promote sustainable farming methods and regenerative agricultural practices through the transfer of knowledge
  - Offer lower cost, higher gain alternatives to current practices
  - Highlight the benefits both economically and environmentally with focus on soil improvement for carbon capture
  - Provide a resource that is accessible across all of Scotland, with emphasis on rural areas
  - Promote co-operation and collaboration within the farming community

- What the initiative involved;

  The creation of 3 video case studies on the environmental benefits of applying (1) organic compost and (2) digestate to land, and on the (3) benefits of grass in an arable rotation for the production of biomethane. Case study videos were presented at a Sustainable Agricultural Event, followed by questions and discussion, with experts in attendance.

- What was achieved;

  Three videos were created that can be used as a resource for knowledge sharing in the future, new connections were formed through networking at the event and interested was garnered in more environmentally friendly agricultural practices.

- Lessons learnt/what might have been delivered differently;

  Timing of future events would be different as feedback from those invited but couldn't attend indicated they were busy with lambing, so future events would be held at a later point in the year. There were some restrictions due to the funding constraints for this event, but it would be a consideration for the future.

- What wider dissemination actions were taken.

  The event was advertised through Farmers Weekly, agricultural discussion groups, Young Farmers, and various Facebook groups.

3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1 Describe what the essence of the project was.

The case studio video series would comprise of three videos aimed at underlining the agricultural industries role in the move towards a low carbon future, whilst sharing knowledge and learnings on food and energy production to the benefit of the environment:
1) The environmental benefits of applying organic compost to land
2) The environmental benefits of applying digestate to land
3) The benefits of grass in an arable rotation for the production of biomethane

The first two videos in the series aimed to promote the transfer of knowledge of sustainable land management and regenerative agricultural practices, and the increased environmental and economic benefits that can be achieved whilst contributing to a more circular economy. These case studies demonstrated that focus on soil improvement in a sustainable manner can restore and enhance soil health by increasing the levels of organic matter enabling it to lock in more carbon from the atmosphere. The benefits also include increasing crop yield whilst providing a better environment for nature and local ecosystems. The third video in the series focused on the benefits of including grass in an arable rotation in terms of the benefits to soil fertility and weed suppression, reduction in the need for fertilisers and agrochemicals, and increased yields in subsequent crop rotations. It also explored the environmental benefits of grass in the production of biomethane as an energy efficient and sustainable system.

4. PROJECT AIMS/OBJECTIVES

4.1 Linking what was set out in the application and why these aims/objectives were sought.

Aim
- To deliver 3 video case studies and a Sustainable Farming Event in March 2022

Objectives
- Promote sustainable farming methods and regenerative agricultural practices through the transfer of knowledge
- Offer lower cost, higher gain alternatives to current practices
- Highlight the benefits both economically and environmentally with focus on soil improvement for carbon capture
- Provide a resource that is accessible across all of Scotland, with emphasis on rural areas
- Promote co-operation and collaboration within the farming community

5. PROJECT OUTCOMES

5.1 How aims/objectives were achieved.

The aims and objectives were achieved by the presentation of the videos to members of the agricultural community at the Sustainable Farming event. Following each video there was the chance for questions to be asked by members of the audience with the experts from the video in attendance to answer. Each question led to interesting discussion, from which additional knowledge was gained.

5.2 Milestones.

The key milestones for the project were:
- The completion of filming

- The completion of editing
- The Sustainable Farming Event

6. LESSONS LEARNED

6.1 Issues/Challenges.

Challenges we faced included
- Filming delays in February due to particularly stormy weather. This impacted filming of footage with drones, and sound quality of interviews.
- Several farmers were unable to attend the event due to lambing.

6.2 Impacts.

- Filming: Enough time had been built into the project timeline to allow for filming dates to be rearranged.
- Attendance: Some people were unable to attend the event in person but were sent the video links to watch. Future events would take lambing into account and be held later in the year, though there were constraints due to the funding deadline.

7. COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT

7.1 Detail throughout the project's lifetime.

The project involved communication with experts in each subject field, farmers who were already using the sustainable practices, and industry experts during the filming of the videos. At the event the farming community in the local areas was engaged in discussion, and question and answer sessions after each video shown. Afterwards most attendees stayed to network, creating further engagement within the scope of the project.

7.2 FAS Engagement (if applicable). n/a

8. KEY FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

There was a high level of interest in the use of compost and digestate as alternatives to chemical fertilisers, especially given the current record price of fertilisers and the ever-increasing pressures to be more environmentally friendly. Around 50% of the audience already used compost or digestate on their farms. There was considerable interest in the inclusion of grass as a cover crop for the production of biomethane, as attention was drawn to the circularity of the resultant digestate from the AD process being returned to land.

9. CONCLUSION

Overall, the project could be regarded as a success. The ideas presented in the videos clearly resonated with those in attendance at the event and there was healthy discussion, debate, and reasoning between the attendees and experts showing the engagement of the audience. Qualitative feedback from those in attendance showed it had been a worthwhile event, and facilitated the transfer of knowledge in sustainable land practices for food and energy production which was the intended outcome.

10. ANNEXES inc:

Finance *(for internal use)*

10.1 Sum awarded.
10.2 Detail of spend.
10.3 Noting any underspend and explain why.