



## Webinar catch up - Sustainable Beef Systems: Fertility

Catch up on our final webinar of our Sustainable Beef Systems series, where we focus on optimising suckler herd fertility.

Hear from SAC farm stockman Bruce Wyper as he discusses the use of AI and synchronisation, and vet Mark Pearson from the Moray Coast vet Group discusses bull fertility. SAC Ruminant Nutritionist Karen Stewart also gives her top tips and advice on optimising getting cows back in calf following spring calving.

Watch our webinar by scanning the QR code below, or by searching for Scotland's Farm Advisory Service on YouTube



## Single Application Form (SAF)

The Single Application Form (SAF) is now open to allow completion of applications and will close on midnight 15th May.

Visit  
[www.ruralpayments.org/](http://www.ruralpayments.org/)  
for more information

## Holistic management series: Holistic grazing & decision making



In the first two articles of our four-part series exploring Holistic Management, we looked at the development of Holistic Grazing and the Holistic Decision Making Framework.

Allan Savory developed Holistic Grazing in Africa following observations that both over-grazing and exclusion of grazing causes desertification in brittle (arid) environments. The solution was to shift away from continuous grazing to a grazing system that mimics herds of migratory ruminants - periods of short duration high stock density grazing, followed by long rest periods between grazing to allow full plant root recovery. The animal's saliva, urine and faeces stimulates biological breakdown of plant matter (which doesn't occur without grazing in such dry environments), and greater herd impact creates a strong trampling effect leading to better ground cover and returning organic matter to the soil.

Allan however recognised that a grazing strategy alone was not sufficient to tackle nature's complexity, or the social, environmental and economic complexity required to keep the human population on the land. From this emerged the development of the Holistic Management Decision Making Framework and Planning Procedures.

Under the Framework, before moving to decision making and actions, the user must first establish their 'Whole Under Management' and 'Holistic Context'. These are then referred to during decision making to ensure that social, environmental, and economic factors are all accounted for.

Defining your Whole Under Management is to clarify what you are managing. Each of us is responsible for managing at least one whole, ourselves, but there may be several larger wholes such as a family, a farm or a business. In clarifying the whole, three key things must be identified:

- The decision makers - identifying those directly involved in the management of the whole.
- The resource base - this includes physical and human resources:
  - » Land, buildings, equipment and other assets on which you will generate revenue or derive support
  - » The people who influence or are influenced by your management.
- The money available or that you can generate from the resource base.

Referring back to the Whole Under Management when making decisions ensures that actions are not taken that may impact, for example, the land or people without this being considered. Next time we'll discuss defining your Context and the four Holistic Planning and Monitoring Procedures.

*Daniel Stout, SAC Consulting*

For full versions of the articles, please visit the links below:

**Holistic Grazing Introduction**  
[www.fas.scot/article/holistic-management-part-1-introduction/](http://www.fas.scot/article/holistic-management-part-1-introduction/)

**Holistic Decision Making Framework**  
[www.fas.scot/article/holistic-management-part-2-holistic-decision-making-framework/](http://www.fas.scot/article/holistic-management-part-2-holistic-decision-making-framework/)

## Free events

At the Farm Advisory Service we run a range of events both online and in-person.

Visit [www.fas.scot/events](http://www.fas.scot/events) to sign up or contact the advice line and we'll help you get booked on.

**Under the Microscope - Fluke & Worms**  
**Contin, 27th March, 10:30am - 2:00pm**

Back by popular demand! Join us for a Women in Agriculture event where we will examine fluke and worms. Can you test at home? What do the results mean? What tests do the lab do and why? Join us for all the answers and an in-depth look with guest speaker Kythe MacKenzie, Veterinary Investigation Officer from SRUC Veterinary Services.



## Outcome-based Agri-Environment Climate Scheme (AECS)



**The Agri-Environment and Climate Scheme (AECS) helps farmers and crofters enhance the benefits their land provides to society and increases the resilience of the farm business. AECS largely works in a prescriptive way, where farmers are paid to deliver a set of pre-defined management actions or prescriptions. This one-size-fits all approach, however, provides little flexibility and, in some instances, the management actions do not deliver the desired impact.**

Outcome-based approaches provide an exciting alternative. Such approaches directly link payments to the outcomes delivered (e.g. quality of a hedge, or the botanical richness of a species-rich grassland). Outcome-based approaches recognise and value the knowledge held by land managers and promote innovation, enabling farmers to meet the desired outcomes in the way that best suits their system. As the level of payment increases with the outcomes achieved, farmers who deliver the greatest benefits are rewarded for doing so. The focus changes from following prescriptive rules to delivering real measurable benefits while maintaining and creating nature-rich habitats.



It is important the desired outcomes are within the farmer's control and can be easily monitored to enable land managers to evaluate their current impact and adapt management to optimise the outcomes delivered. NatureScot are developing a range of user-friendly scorecards to help farmers monitor the quality of their nature-rich habitats. These scorecards allow land managers to easily assess habitat quality and help to identify where management could be tweaked to further benefit nature. With a greater focus on habitat quality, trials indicate outcome-based approaches deliver greater benefits to nature.

*Dr Lorna Cole, SAC Consulting*

To read this article in full, please visit:

[www.fas.scot/article/outcome-based-agri-environment-and-climate-schemes/](http://www.fas.scot/article/outcome-based-agri-environment-and-climate-schemes/)

*Scotland's Farm Advisory Service (FAS) is funded by the Scottish Government, providing information and resources aimed at increasing the profitability and sustainability of farms and crofts. Grant support, a full programme of events, a subscription service for crofts and small farms, and a range of articles and publications form the core of this service which is designed to provide integrated advice for farmers and crofters across Scotland.*



**National Advice Hub**  
**T: 0300 323 0161**  
**E: [advice@fas.scot](mailto:advice@fas.scot)**  
**W: [www.fas.scot](http://www.fas.scot)**

If you need more advice on any topic, the Farm Advisory Service has a range of support and help available:

### Advice line

For free telephone advice on a wide variety of topics including cross compliance, water framework directive requirements, climate change and other technical issues call us on **0300 323 0161** or email [advice@fas.scot](mailto:advice@fas.scot). The advice line operates between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday.

### Bespoke Advice and Grants

FAS can also help you to increase the profitability and sustainability of your farming business through Scottish Government grants including Integrated Land Management Plans (ILMPs) – worth up to £1,200.

The ILMP will identify opportunities and cost savings for your business, based on an independent and confidential assessment of your business by an experienced farm business adviser of your choosing. As part of your plan you can choose to benefit from up to two further specialist advice plans.

### Online

Our website contains articles, videos and much more at [www.fas.scot](http://www.fas.scot)



**Scottish Government**  
**Riaghaltas na h-Alba**  
**gov.scot**