



SHEEP-BASED ENTERPRISES ...ideas for Gwynedd



Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig is focused on making the best use of local resources and innovating. Gwynedd has world leading sheep husbandry skills, tradition, heritage, and suitable terrain, but more work needs to be done to look at innovative approaches to running profitable marked led sheep enterprises.

The table below summarises the work conducted by evaluating the different ideas in terms of their suitability for an AGW supported pilot.

* Innovative ideas for sheep-based enterprises in Gwynedd...

	Innovation	Potential Added Value	Impact	Agility	Pilot Practicality	Overall
New Sheep Breeds: Introducing new breeds with unique characteristics such as luxury meat or fine wool to add value to a sheep-based enterprise.	5	5	4	5	2	4.1
Sheep Experiences: Tours and holidays including experiences such as lambing and shearing.	3	5	3	4	4	3.7
Specific Vegetation Sheep: Sheep managed on specific type of vegetation to bring value and story to the products.	3	4	4	4	3	3.6
Advertise With Sheep: Equip sheep with waterproof blankets with a printed company logo.	5	3	2	2	5	3.5
Therapy Sheep: New technique of relaxation and bonding, which helps reduce stress and anxiety.	5	3	2	4	3	3.4
Dairy Sheep: A growing market with scope for Gwynedd to lead in the UK.	1	5	5	3	2	3.3
Sheep Walking: Unique tourist experience where groups of people can learn about different sheep breeds and unique personalities before taking them for a walk.	3	4	2	3	4	3.3
Sheep Heritage Centre: Offer an insight to the history of sheep farming and their importance to the area.	5	3	4	3	1	3.2
Breeding For Pet Lambs: Alternative way of adding value to sheep breeding.	3	2	2	3	3	2.7
Conservation Grazing: Effective and natural way to maintain certain habitats such as grassland and heathland.	1	2	3	3	4	2.7
Sheep Poo Paper: Handcrafted papers made from recycled sheep poo.	3	2	2	3	3	2.7



pilot...learn...share





1.

New Sheep Breeds

- It is estimated that there are over 1,000 distinct breeds of sheep in the world. New breeds could be introduced for their unique characteristics such as luxury meat or fine wool. Selling these products would add value to a sheep-based enterprise and there would be further opportunity for developing a market for their bloodlines.



- Positive:** Significant opportunities to develop new valuable niche markets for different breeds not currently in the UK. Expertise for bringing new breeds over is available through local company Lafan Consultancy Group who bought over Damara and Dohne type Merino embryos.

- Negative:** Significant import barriers need to be navigated and will require at least £10k of capital to purchase genetics, carry out embryo transfer, and for carriage and various import levies.



2.

Sheep Experiences

- With Gwynedd having a strong sheep industry, tours and holidays could be organised to include different systems of farming, breeds, services, and products. Half or full day packages could be offered to experience lambing and shearing seasons or even felting workshops. Establishments such as the Wool Testing Authority Europe, Bio Composites Centre and Cosyn Cymru could form part of a tour.

- Positive:** Allows farmers to diversify into travel and tourism to complement Gwynedd's strong tourist trade and increase income. Market intelligence indicates demand for well packaged experiences in Gwynedd. 'Zip World' for example are seeking options to offer customers who want other alternative experiences whilst visiting their attractions.

- Negative:** Already happening in parts of Wales.



3.

Specific Vegetation Sheep

- Sheep managed on specific types of vegetation to bring value and story to the retail products could be an idea well suited to farmers with the right land / seascape (e.g. heather, mountain, salt marsh). Plus appropriate systems and willingness to invest resources in developing routes to market and branding. These flocks could also help create sustainable environments and healthy biodiversity - grazing at a suitable stocking rate for each unique area can maintain and even flourish heather and other vegetation.

- Positive:** Good opportunities to create a strong brand identity for niche products. Resilient market channels could be valuable in the face of uncertainty for sheep farmers due to policy reforms, climate change and probable trade deals opening more global competition in red meat.

- Negative:** Some vegetation managed flocks such as salt marsh lamb are already in Gwynedd.

Bringing Welsh wool stakeholders together to realise the potential of wool as a natural, sustainable & versatile material



Watch the film about our multipurpose sheep project where we crossbred Romney & Merino sheep to improve the quality of their wool



for more information on this project & to read the full report please visit

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