



BRITISH GRASSLAND SOCIETY MEMBERS NEWSLETTER Nov 2009

BGS Grazing Partners — more mentors needed

The nine farmer mentors trained in June to help other farmers with their grassland management, in the Grazing Partners pilot year, have been visiting farmers who have requested their help.

The mentors report that they feel able to offer useful support to those they have visited and have had positive discussions on potential improvements to the grassland management seen. They also report that it was a good experience, learning new things, as well as the feel-good factor from helping others, and we will be paying them too.

Our beef, sheep and dairy partners in 2009 were sponsored by DairyCo, EBLEX, The National Trust and BGS - with Duchy College Rural Business School VTS funding through the Rural Development Programme for England in the south west.

The success of the project so far, with demand for partners in areas we have been unable to offer mentors, means we are having positive discussions with our sponsors and are very close to signing up the funding required to train 12 more mentors in late January.

We are currently looking for dairy, beef and sheep farmers who would like to be mentors, as well as anyone that wants some help with grassland management. Please contact Sara Gregson for more details on 01799 530934 or sara@saragregson.co.uk or see the BGS website for more information.



NEW BGS Project Co-ordinator

Lois Macdonald has joined the BGS team as its new Project Co-ordinator.

Lois has recently graduated from Harper Adams University College, Shropshire. She had been working on a local village farm in Yorkshire since high school, and taking part in a number of country pursuits and activities, which lead her to an education in the rural sector.

Lois worked for Women in Rural Enterprise as part of her industrial placement year, which saw her attend the key agricultural shows. In her third year at Harper she was Marketing Officer, spending the summer managing its show stand.



BGS 9th Research Conference

Almost 50 researchers, advisers, trade specialists and farmers joined us for the two day conference at Harper Adams in September, for what turned out to be a practical and relevant programme.

A report on some of the papers will appear in the December issue of Grass and Forage Farmer.

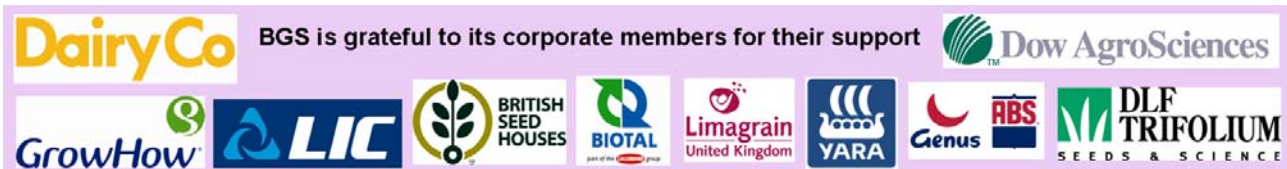
You can also order a CD of the Proceedings in our online shop at www.britishgrassland.com costing just £15 for members (sorry no spare printed copies are available) or you can order the back catalogue of Research Conference Proceedings 1-9 at a members price of £40 or £60 for non-members and £100 for libraries and institutions.

We were grateful for sponsorship from GrowHow UK and the support of the Stapledon Memorial Trust for this conference.



BGS has signed up its 10th Corporate Member

If your company is interested in becoming a corporate member please contact Jess in the BGS office



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BGS Nutrient Wise Demos - hosts first visitors

BGS Nutrient Wise Demos is BGS's biggest investment in its future for many years. Council decided our pilot site should be funded by BGS to develop a scheme with maximum benefit to BGS and local society members, to find out the real costs of such a project and then seek funding for more sites.

Our first three groups totaling 55 people attended sessions at our first BGS Nutrient Wise Demo site near Crediton in Devon, on September 29th and 30th, set up with the help of Creedy Associates.

The aim is to bring small groups of 15-20 to the site to see practical demonstrations and discuss manure use and clover establishment. The groups included members of BGS, Devon Grassland Society, North Devon Grassland Society and Gloucestershire Suckler Cow Club.

While BGS funds established the site, we are grateful for the support on the event days from the Duchy Rural Business School and the Vocational Training Scheme (VTS) - VTS is a Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) funded initiative. Funding to continue demos in the south west has been applied for and we hope to spread this initiative into other BGS regions over the next 2-3 years

See the December issue of Grass and Forage Farmer for a report of what they saw or book in for a visit next spring by contacting BGS - at its new office on 02476 696600.



Legacies to the Travel-Bursary fund

If you have enjoyed taking part in BGS activities, please consider helping us to boost the funds for bursary awards with a legacy. This will allow us to support younger people in their search for grassland knowledge. All you need to do is notify your solicitor or put a note in your will stating the amount of legacy, and our name, address and charity no. 261800.

EGF 23rd General Meeting, Kiel, Germany: Grassland in a Changing World - meeting the requirements of producers, livestock, society and the environment

This year's EGF meeting will take place August 29th to Sept 2nd at the University of Kiel. Sessions will include: Grassland and global change; The future of grassland production systems; From grass to milk and meat; Grassland ecosystem services and Pastoral/grazing systems. There will be three or six day pre-conference tours. See www.egf2010.de for more details

AAB and BES Conference, Leicester, UK: Agri-environment Schemes - what have they achieved and where do we go from here?

This three-day Association of Applied Biologists and British Ecological Society Agricultural Ecology Group conference, will take place from April 27th to 29th. See www.aab.org.uk for details.

Keep up to date with BGS and industry news online at www.britishgrassland.com

The news content, event calendar and many other pages on our new website are being regularly updated so be sure to check it out frequently. to see reports from events, plus BGS and industry news.

Recent news items include: Fertiliser investment plans, Silage dry matter guessing games and the announcement of the winner of the BGS National Grassland Management Competition, sponsored by GrowHow and DLF-Trifolium.

New members

If you have a friend or colleague you think should join BGS, please ask for an application form or see our website for more details of the benefits of membership. It's easy to join online using a credit or debit card.

2010 Diary Dates

March-April - BGS, RABDF and Dairy Co Spring Farm walks series

April-June - BGS Nutrient Wise demos - visits for members and local societies

April 27th-29th - AAB and BES conference: Agri-environment schemes (see above)

May 11th - Scotgrass - at SAC Crichton Royal, Dumfries

July 4th-7th - BGS & South East Scotland Grassland Soc. Summer Meeting, Edinburgh

Aug 29th-Sept 2th - EGF General Meeting, Germany (see above)

Sept 7th-8th The Dairy Event and Livestock Show at NEC, Birmingham

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