



Hybu Cig Cymru – Meat Promotion Wales (HCC) is the organisation responsible for the development, promotion and marketing of Welsh red meat. HCC works with all sectors of the Welsh red meat industry – from the farmers through to retailers to develop the industry as well as develop profitable markets for Welsh lamb and Welsh beef.

The Industry Development Team focus on working with farmers and processors to improve quality and increase cost effectiveness within the industry in Wales. A number of programmes and activities are delivered by the team as outlined below. Full details of all HCC's activities can be found on the website at [www.hccmpw.org.uk](http://www.hccmpw.org.uk), together with information on forthcoming events and recent news articles.

## Farming Connect

HCC delivers the Red Meat Development Programme on behalf of Farming Connect. This programme is funded by the Welsh Assembly Government and aims to help producers adopt new practices, share ideas, address market needs and encourage innovation. To achieve this there is a network of Red Meat Demonstration Farms and Development Farms across Wales that undertake business monitoring and small projects to demonstrate new technologies and ideas. Recent projects have included targeting anthelmintic treatments, improving silage quality, use of clover to improve sward quality and using performance recorded stock to improve carcass quality and reduce finishing periods.

There is also a network of red meat discussion groups who meet regularly to discuss topical issues

and share experiences. Regular events are held for farmers where information is disseminated and farmers can discuss issues relevant to them. Further information on Farming Connect can be found on the HCC website.

## Research and Development

HCC considers research and development (R&D) to be a core activity to improve the efficiency of the red meat sector in Wales. Research projects are either funded solely by HCC or for projects of relevance to the whole of the UK joint funding with other bodies such as EBLEX Ltd (English Red Meat levy board), QMS (Quality Meat Scotland) and LMC (Livestock and Meat Commission Northern Ireland).

Key areas for research include genetic improvement, animal health and welfare, traceability, nutrition (animal and human) and environmental issues. Information gathered in these projects can then be used during HCC's technology transfer activities to inform the wider industry of new technologies.

## Technology Transfer

Providing Welsh farmers with information is a key part of the Industry Development Team's activities. This is undertaken through discussion group meetings and on-farm events as well as through a comprehensive collection of publications aimed at farmers. A presence at major events is also effective and farmers in



particular will be aware of the HCC stands at the Royal Welsh Agricultural Show. The team also attend other shows including NSA Sheep Event, Beef Expo and local county shows. HCC staff are on hand at such events to discuss the latest developments in the industry as well as distributing technical booklets and encouraging farmers to participate in competitions.



The HCC website is a valuable source of information for producers and consumers. News of current events and activities are listed as well as further information on all of HCC's activities. Technical booklets and research project reports can be downloaded and all the latest market prices are listed. The website also has information on projects that have been carried out in the past including the Welsh Beef Quality Improvement project and the Woodchip for Livestock Bedding project.

### **Genetic Improvement**

HCC's genetic improvement programme is funded through the Welsh Assembly Government's Rural Development Plan Supply Chain Efficiencies Scheme. This programme provides support to breeders for improving genetics and performance recording their pedigree animals, and also provides guidance to commercial breeders to assist them in selecting animals for breeding that will maximise production and profitability.



### **Industry Information and Benchmarking**

This programme of work is also funded through the Rural Development Plan Supply Chain Efficiencies Scheme. HCC gathers essential information and statistics about the Welsh and global red meat industries and uses this information to inform strategic decisions.

Benchmarking is a useful tool that allows businesses to establish where improvements can be made by comparing individual elements (e.g. costs of production and performance data) against similar businesses. HCC works with groups of farmers and encourages them to undertake benchmarking as a group activity. This will allow individuals to compare their performance with that of similar businesses and identify where improvements can be made.

### **Training**

HCC through funding from the Rural Development Plan Supply Chain Efficiencies Scheme carries out a number of training courses across Wales each year. An example of this is the 'Selection for Slaughter' courses which take place in abattoirs and enable farmers to grade animals live prior to slaughter and see the same animals after they have been killed. This provides essential feedback to the farmer and enables them to update their grading skills in line with current market requirements.



### **Scholarship**

The HCC Livestock Scholarship is awarded annually to candidates who are employed full time in the Welsh red meat industry and are able to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to the industry. The funding enables them to travel abroad and view relevant farming practices in a country of their choice for a maximum of six weeks. Their experiences and the information gathered are then fed back to the Welsh industry via a series of talks and a written report.

For further information on the activities of Industry Development contact HCC on 01970 625050 or [info@hccmpw.org.uk](mailto:info@hccmpw.org.uk)