February 2020

Please note the new email address from 1st February 2020 katherine@ehfn.org.uk

Latest News

Exmoor Hill Farming Network CIC is launched

New 100% Farmer-Led Network Has Community at Heart

The Exmoor Hill Farming Network has established itself as a Community Interest Company (CIC) and will be running as an independent, 100% farmer-led organisation from 1st February 2020. The move will mean greater independence for the Network, which already works with around 318 farming businesses, with opportunities to reinvest assets in the community and attract new sources of funding.

The newly appointed board consists of 11 directors and 4 advisory board members, led by Dave Knight, who has been Chair of the Network since its establishment 5 years ago.

Until now, the Network has been hosted and supported by North Devon +, an economic delivery agency for North Devon and Torridge, which runs a number of rural development programmes in the area.

Dave Knight, EHFN Chairman of Directors said ‘’We are immensely proud of the progress the Network has made under the auspices of North Devon + so that it is trusted by farmers and other land managing businesses in the Greater Exmoor areas as a source of valuable advice, training and support in these uncertain times’’. Dave added ‘’North Devon + has played a key role in this success and we hope to continue a close working relationship going forward.’’ The Network was established in early 2014 to improve the viability and sustainability of Exmoor farming businesses. It does this through knowledge-transfer, peer-group support, training, and co-operation to safeguard upland farming, rural employment and landscape management. It has become one of the most sought-after initiatives on Exmoor, providing the ‘go-to hub’ of information and contacts for land-based businesses, overseen by its highly regarded Network Officer, Katherine Williams. The majority of the costs of running the Network are met by funding from The Prince’s Countryside Fund, Exmoor National Park Authority and North Devon Council, due to run until 31st January 2021. Other key partners and sponsors include Masons Kings, NFU, Dunster Show Society, Exmoor Farmers Livestock Auctions, Baldwins and Towergate Insurance. During the past 18 months, the Network steering group has undertaken a Governance Review set out by the Exmoor National Park Authority. The Group took advice from other organisations such as Farm Cornwall and The Cumbria Farmer Network, who operate a similar structure, to build confidence that a fully-fledged independent route was in the best interest of Exmoor’s farming communities.

Sarah Bryan, Chief Executive of Exmoor National Park Authority, said “It’s been a pleasure to see the Exmoor Hill Farming Network grow from strength to strength and we’re pleased to see them complete their independence through this next step. Having a strong voice for the farming community on Exmoor is vital to sustaining the traditional farming practices and ways of life that make our landscapes special. We look forward to continuing to support them in this next venture.”

Ken Miles and Jenny Wallace, Joint CEO’s, North Devon + said “The Exmoor Hill Farming Network has been a wonderful and truly innovative project that North Devon + has been involved with from the start. It provides vital resources and support for the farming community and is a model for community involvement that others have followed. We at North Devon + are really pleased to see it now flourishing and becoming independent and are proud of our role in the Network’s development. We look forward to seeing how the Network develops further and to working with the Network in the future.” The Network hub will remain at Cutcombe Market by kind
permission of Exmoor Farmers Livestock Auctioneers and will continue to aid farmers with its flagship Exmoor’s Ambition project feeding into DEFRA’s Test and Trials of its new Environmental Land Management Scheme.

Open Event

**Successful Succession – details attached**

**Date:** Wednesday 5th February 2020  **Time:** 7.15pm for 7.30pm prompt start – 9.30pm.  **Venue:** Withypool Village Hall

A informative meeting arranged with Baldwins and Barclays. The event will consist of the following agenda:

- Welcome and Introductions
- The Future of your Business and Protecting Family Assets
- Providing for Children, Will and IHT planning
- Q & A Session

Sandwich buffet included and please let us know of any dietary requirements. Booking essential for catering purposes.

Peer Support Groups

**EHFN Next Generation Group Meeting –February 2020 (All under 30’s and local YFC members welcome )**

Shearwell Data Visit

**Date:** Monday 17th February 2020  **Time:** 7pm-9pm  **Venue:** Shearwell Data, Wheddon Cross, Minehead by kind permission of Mr and Mrs R Webber.

Shearwell Data Ltd was established in 1975 and is a family business, owned by Richard and Carolyne Webber, based at Wheddon Cross in Somerset. Shearwell Data Ltd (SDL) is an animal identification and software management business, supporting livestock farmers in the UK and overseas with quality management services and equipment including tags, EID readers, a range of comprehensive software packages and handling systems. Our business aims to provide a complete system to help farmers fully understand and benefit from the data they gather from their livestock. As a farmer owned business, we believe we understand farmers’ needs. All SDL products are trialled on our farms before going into production to ensure quality, reliability and ease of use for livestock farmers. We provide free replacement tags for the life of the animal, with the added benefit of having industry leading retention levels. We provide excellent customer service and our technical team is able to support and advise farmers with queries.

**Tour of the facilities to include:**

- A brief overview of the Shearwell Data Ltd business
- Manufacturing and production
- Packaging
- R&D
- Warehouse operations
- Customer services and sales
- IT

Join us to find out more and there will be plenty of opportunity to ask lots of questions. A sandwich buffet will be provided. Booking essential for catering purposes by Thursday 13th February 2020 at the very latest.
Exmoor Women in Farming Group Meeting – February 2020

Topic: Post mortem examination-Why? What? How? Tour of Starcross Veterinary Investigation Centre including laboratory and post mortem room

Date: Tuesday 25th February 2020 Venue: Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), Starcross VIC, Staplake Mount, Starcross, Exeter, EX6 8PE

Peer Support Contribution: £5pp Time: Leaving Cutcombe Market/ South Molton Rugby Club at 10am for 11am start - 1.30pm at the latest.

Coffee on arrival, and cake and biscuits will be provided. Lunch is not included but we can stop off on route home.

Introduction: APHA Starcross Veterinary Investigation Centre offers subsidised post mortem services to investigate disease in livestock, avian and wildlife species across the South West. These post mortem examinations not only offer a diagnosis to the farmer but also provide the Government with surveillance data on both common and new and emerging disease threats to the UK livestock industry. The laboratory facilities at Starcross carry out a wide range of diagnostic testing and the onsite veterinary investigation officers regularly provide expertise to both farmers and private vets on disease investigation and unusual cases seen on farm. A short talk will be given at the beginning of the session before a full tour of the testing facilities and post mortem room and hopefully a chance for some hands on activities looking at how common livestock conditions are diagnosed. Attendees will leave with a good knowledge of when post mortems can be of use and what conditions they can diagnose.

Key Topics to be covered:

- Tour of laboratory
- Benefits of post mortems
- Tests and common conditions found
- Diagnosis
- Talks from laboratory staff
- Visit the Post Mortem room
- Areas of testing – slides and bacteriology plates

Booking essential by Friday 21st February 2020 as places are limited to 15 people max. If there is sufficient interest we will hold a further visit later in the year. **PLEASE BOOK EARLY. This visit will contain scenes of veterinary situations that some may find upsetting. Please be mindful of this at the time of booking.** Please ensure your clothing is clean and you will be asked to wear a lab coat for bio security purposes.

Training

Mastering Medicines

EHFN has noted local veterinary practices offering these courses in the local area. We would suggest contacting your vet practice to take up this opportunity if you are wishing to complete the course in the near future.
Safe use of Pesticides

We have a small waiting list of candidates wishing to complete the course asap. If you are interested in making up the group to a sufficient number to train. Please contact Katherine for further information. We would look to complete the course before mid-march at the very latest.

Latest News from NFU

South West NFU Upland Conference – FINAL REMINDER

The SW NFU is partnering with AHDB to put on the “Uplands 2030” conference aimed at SW upland farming. Date of conference: Monday 10th February 2020

Venue: Westpoint Hall, Westpoint, Clyst St Mary, Exeter, EX5 1DJ

Time: Registration 1000 - conference end 1500

Overview: Now a regular event, the SW Uplands conferences have developed a reputation for bringing in a predominantly farmer audience and tackling the biggest issues of the times in a positive way. The focus is always on solutions and answers and not descending into rabbit holes of despair (where possible). For Uplands 2030 the theme is all about the future of farming on SW uplands and business resilience. Whilst there are many (unknown) unknowns, farmers still need to make plans and make viable businesses. At Uplands 2030 we will be looking at how farmers, landowners, government, national parks and academics see the opportunities. There will be insights into what might be the ways to make money in the coming years and where the focus of the key buyers (commodity, government and environmental) is going to be and how farmers can get involved. Speakers from: Farmers from across England, Defra, Exmoor National Park Authority, Duchy of Cornwall, Triodos Bank, Environment Agency, Derek Gow Consultancy, NFU, AHDB, University of Exeter. Booking: There is a maximum of 1 place per organisation. If you feel there is an overwhelming case for your organisation to have another person attend then please contact me (no promises and likely onto a reserve list) Booking via link below: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/uplands-2030-new-era-new-opportunities-southern-conference-tickets-85977331513

Other News

The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) offers a free-to-farmer carcass collection service in England and Wales.

This service collects livestock carcasses from farms free of charge for disease investigation and is available to those farms more than an hour from either an APHA Veterinary Investigation Centre (VIC) or one of APHA’s partner post-mortem examination (PME) providers (http://apha.defra.gov.uk/vet-gateway/surveillance/diagnostic/index.htm).

APHA works with vets and farmers to investigate and diagnose livestock, poultry and wildlife disease across Great Britain, by offering a state-of-the-art PME and sample testing service.

The service is provided when disease is suspected and post mortem examination of the carcass may be of surveillance value. To access the service, farmers should contact their vet who will discuss the case with the duty vet at their local PME centre, which for Exmoor farmers is located in Starcross, Devon. If it is agreed that a PME would be beneficial, APHA will undertake this at a subsidised rate, including any further tests that need to be undertaken. To check if the free collection service is available to you go to APHA’s online postcode search tool on the APHA Vet Gateway: http://apha.defra.gov.uk/postcode/pme.asp.

Further details about post mortem and APHA services are available here: http://apha.defra.gov.uk/vet-gateway/surveillance/diagnostic/pme.htm.
Commercial Adverts

Lambing Help required

We have members looking for seasonal lambing/calving work if you have a opportunity available or would be interested in work. Please register your interest with Katherine (in strictest confidence). A £25 commercial advert fee applies to all successful vacancies fulfilled.

To book or for further information on any of the above. Please contact Katherine Williams on 07970795808 or katherine@ehfn.org.uk