

# Herd and Flock Symposium

Stirling

14th June 2011



**J & E Logan**

Pirntaton Farm

Stow

Galashiels

# Who are we?

- Family partnership
- 4 Full-time employees including-
- 2 Shepherds (looking after Pirntaton and Raeshaw)
- 1 Cattleman
- 1 Tractorman/GFW

# The Farm

- Pirntaton situated in the Moorfoot Hills
- Lies in the “Galawater Valley” from which our Aberdeen-Angus herd takes its name.
- Land rises from 850 feet to 1650 feet
- 90% lies over 1000 feet
- Farm divided by 3 burns running due East so exposed to the extreme weather from that direction.

# Land Types

- 630 Ha Total
- 147 Ha Rough Grazing
- 328 Ha Permanent Pasture
- 90 Ha Temporary Grassland
- 55 Ha Woodland, Buildings etc.

# Business Objective and General Rules

- To produce the “optimal” number of high quality livestock as efficiently as possible
- Know the limitations of our farm
- Least cost is not always most efficient
- Highest output is rarely optimal
- Nature can always kick you in the ass

# Farming System

- Farm run along Organic system
- High reliance on clover based swards for both grazing and conservation
- Minimal agrochemical / fertiliser use
- Best use of FYM and Slurry (Johne's concern)
- Using breeds which make best use of farm
- No arable crops grown since 2001

# Sheep

- Closed “Stratified” flock
- 225 Pure BF
- 200 Crossed BF
- 400 Mules
- 400 Texel x Mules
- 80 Unregistered Texels
- 40 Unregistered Suffolks
- 40 Registered Texels



# Sheep production system

- Ewes out-wintered (snacker fed)
- Ewes scan from 150% to 215%
- Lambing from 1<sup>st</sup> March to mid May
- Lamb outside/inside . Day/night
- Lambs sold from early July (mainly off mother)
- Weaned lambs finished on Red Clover
- Only tail end and entire hill lambs fed.
- Aim to have all sold by end of year.

# Tup Sales

- Around 90 tups sold annually
- Most used as lambs, sold as shearlings
- BF tup lambs have sold to £7,000
- BF shearlings have sold to £3,500
- Un-reg Texels have sold to £2,600
- Registered Texels have sold to £3,500
- Un reg Suffolks have sold to £1,200
- Sheep are still un-recorded



# Health Plan & Vet involvement

- Clostridial and abortion vaccination
- Lambing shed protocol
- Fluke and worm egg counts
- Worming and flukicide recommendations
- Mineral and trace element testing and recommendations
- Fertility testing rams
- SAHPS system being put in place
- Time needs to be set aside for this separately

# Cattle

- Closed Herd
- Only bulls and very occasional female purchased
- 100 Pedigree Angus
- 40 Homebred Angus cross
- ET and AI used extensively
- PCHS member



# Cattle production system

- Cattle rations based on silage fed TMR
- Heifers calved at 2 year old
- Mixture of in and out-wintering of cows
- Heifers calve from mid April, cows start May
- Cows calve outside on summer pastures
- Bulls are now all left entire
- Bulls finished 13- 15 months (higher forage)
- Most heifers retained or sold for breeding, remainder finished around 22 months

# Bull Sales

- All reared on high forage diet
- Around 10 - 15 bulls sold annually
- Mainly privately at home
- Bulls have sold to 28,000gns including 15,000gns for our Perth Supreme Champ in 2007 and a £15,000 private sale in 2010
- Females have sold to 6,500 gns
- All pedigree cattle are performance recorded
- All 2009/2010 calves rank in the top 15% for Terminal Index and Self Replacing Index



# A Day to Remember

- Reserve Junior Champion
- Top price of 28,000 gns
- Top average of 15,000 gns
- All three sold to Pedigree Herds
- All sons of Rawburn Elysium



# Genetics for sale

- Growing and important part of our business
- Semen sold from Stock Bulls
- Semen rights purchased abroad for our own use and for sale
- Embryos have been sold from our ET program

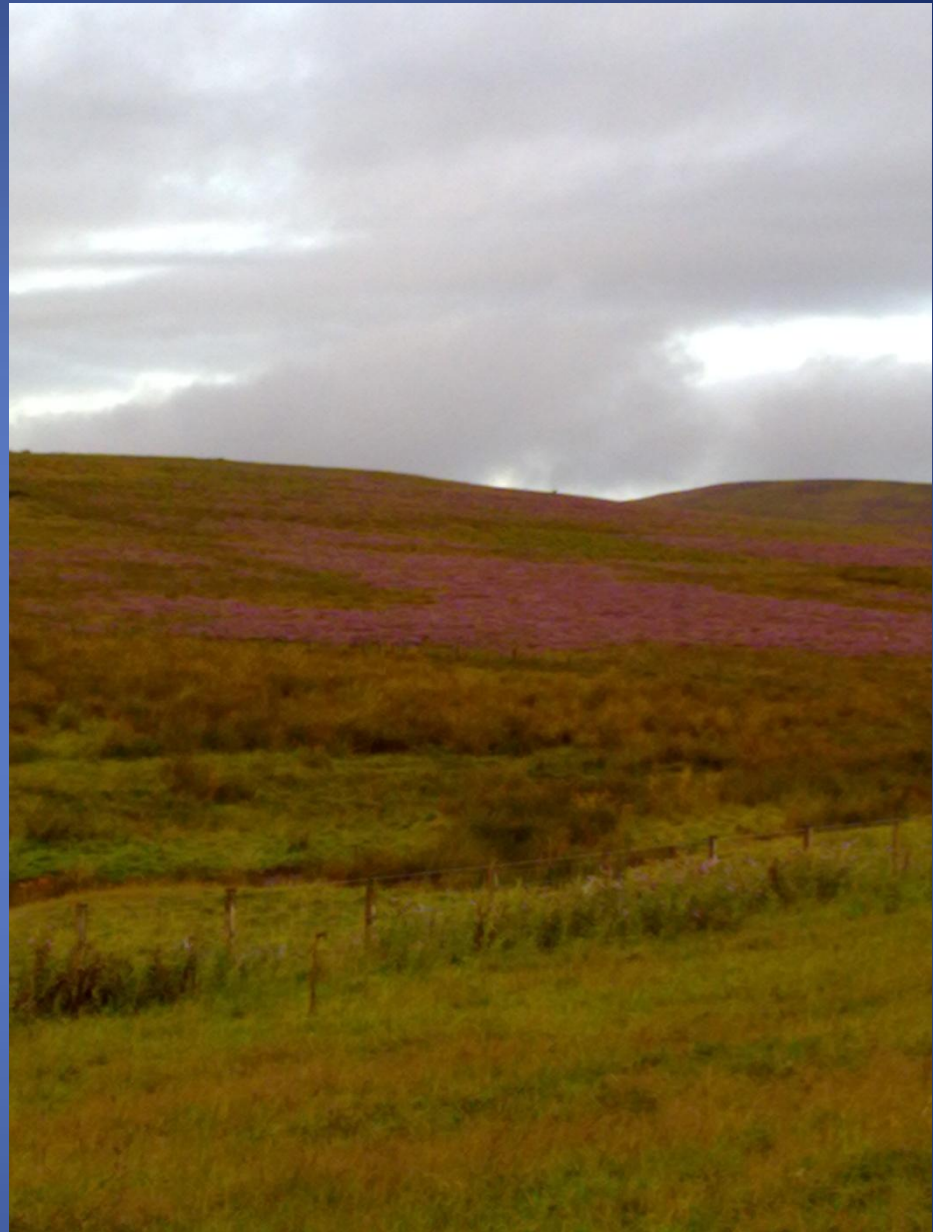


# Health Plan & Vet involvement

- Membership and testing for Health Scheme
- Advice on action to take on above
- Vaccination advice for cows and calves (BVD, IBR, Blackleg)
- Semen testing bulls
- Pregnancy scanning
- SAHPS system being put in place
- Again, time should be set aside for this separately

# Raeshaw

- Also manage farms on famous Grouse Moor
- Estate covers around 8,500 acres
- Our 2 shepherds run this along with home
- Moor managed sympathetically for grouse and heather
- 1000 ewes run where 3000 used to
- Small number of tups sold
- Very high scan (175%) allowing 300 ewe lambs to be sold



# The future and expectations

- More to gain from selection than new treatments for many problems eg. dystocia, worms, feet, temperament. Move towards “Easier care” whilst maintaining production and quality
- Hope for breakthrough in testing, vaccination or gene mapping for “difficult” diseases eg Johnes
- Change in sales policy if Johnes can't be controlled
- Hope our vet will keep up to speed on developments that will affect us
- Use of benchmarking
- More preventative and targeted treatments
- Nutritional advice (heifers, bulls and finishers)