

Hafod Y Llan Organic Farm and Estate case study

Farm manager	John Till.
Head warden	Keith Jones.
Farm owner	The National Trust.
Address	Hafod Y Llan.
Phone /email	01766 890473.
Grid Ref	SH 628 514.
Size	1559 hectares (3851 acres).
Tenancy	In – hand farming.
Date when farm competed organic conversion	2002.
History	The current Estate comprises three main holdings which are themselves a collection of smaller flocks and farms dating back to centuries ago. The Estate was bought by the National Trust in 1998. Organic conversion began in 2000.

Physical features

General description	A mountain estate at the heart of Snowdonia which comprises three main holdings (Hafod Y Llan, Bwlch and Gelli lago).
Soil types	
Altitude	80 metres to 1085 metres (top of Snowdon).
Rainfall	340 cm per year (one of the wettest areas in Britain).

Land use

Crops	Grassland.
Crops used in rotation	None.
Set a side	None.
Stewardship	The farm has a management agreement with the Countryside Council of Wales.
Woodland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 74 hectares of Oak woodland. • 20 hectares of Ash woodland. The woodland is managed with the Forestry Commission.

Animals

Cows	The breed is 'Welsh Black'.
Sheep	The breed is 'Welsh Mountain'.

Labour	1 Farm manager, 2 stockmen/ shepherds, 1 conservation shepherd, 1 warden.
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Machinery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 tractors • 2 ATV's (All terrain vehicles) • 3 4x4 vehicles • 1 sheep shower • 1 JCB digger • 1 grass harrow • 1 straw cropper • 1 roller • 3 livestock trailers.
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Markets for farm produce

Beef	Beef is sold: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Direct to the customer 2. At auctions.
Lamb	Lamb is sold: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Direct to the customer through a meat box scheme 2. As store lambs (to be fattened on another farm) 3. Direct sales to abattoir.

Diversification

Alternative sources of income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 education centres • 3 bunk houses • 5 rented houses • 1 camp site.
Other features / attractions	Annual ram sale.

Environmental benefits

Habitats	Dry heath, wet heath, juniper heath, blanket bog, oak woodland, mixed Ash woodland, mixed broadleaf woodland, purple moorgrass and rush pasture, acid grassland, stone walls, cliffs, screes, mines and quarries.
Unusual / significant wildlife	Bryophytes and lichens, feral goats, choughs (a rare bird).

Significant changes arising from organic conversion

Animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total numbers of sheep on the Estate have fallen from 2861 in 1999 to 1415 in 2001. • 30 cattle have been introduced.
Labour	Labour force has increased due to improved management of habitats.
Types of crops grown	The farm is looking in to the possibility of introducing barley and oats as part of a rotation.
Change in balance of land use (arable v. animal)	The emphasis in the management of the farm has changed from simply animal production to the recovery of native flora and fauna.
Income from produce / profitability of farm	
Noticeable changes in wildlife	The main changes in vegetation so far have been a recovery of the heath land. Woodland expansion will improve wildlife habitats.
Other – eg personal outlook on farming	Until recently the management of the farm had not been beneficial for conservation. Dry stone walling and fencing, the reduction in sheep numbers and the introduction of cattle means that Hafod Y Llan is now being farmed in a way that is more sensitive to the environment.