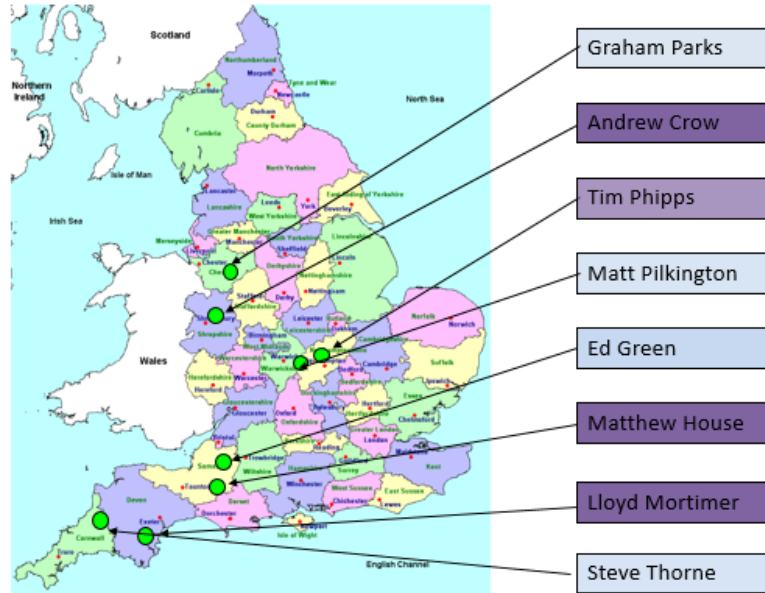


Improving beef performance from grazing

AHDB Beef & Lamb is working with beef producers to develop ways to improve performance from grass and forage.

There is growing interest from beef producers in grazing cattle for more days, gaining more weight from grass and understanding the potential benefits of rotational grazing. The potential of grass and forages in relation to growth rates for beef cattle is well-known, but is often not realised on English farms. This project aims to highlight the potential of grass and forages for beef cattle production and will provide practical guidance on how beef producers can improve their current grazing management.



Project summary

So far, four grassland mentors have been identified; three beef producers (Graham Parks, Ed Green, Steve Thorne) and one dairy producer (Matt Pilkington). They will be linked with four beef producers (Andrew Crow, Tim Phipps, Matthew House and Lloyd Mortimer) who want to significantly improve their current beef performance from grass. Working with two consultants, Marc Jones (ADAS) and Charlie Morgan (independent grassland specialist), the aim is to up-skill the improver farms and to then feedback the key messages to the wider industry.

The project aims to target three key areas on the improver farms, which will affect profitability by cutting the cost of production and by increasing output. These include:

1. **Number of days cattle are housed**
2. **Stocking rates across the grazing platform**
3. **Growth rates from grazing and silage/forage**

The four farm improvers will be split between Marc Jones and Charlie Morgan, who will help them work through ideas and suggestions that come from the mentors.

Alongside the practical work on farm, a review of current tools available for monitoring and managing grass will be completed. A study of the barriers preventing uptake of new approaches to managing grass by beef farmers will also be carried out. This report will highlight the type of resources that could support English beef producers to maximise grass potential on farm.

The aim is that, by the end of the project, a blueprint for managing grass for beef cattle will be created. This will include targets for growth rates, stocking rates, cover targets and infrastructure requirements. In addition, key performance indicators will be identified which relate to grassland management and profitability from beef. These are likely to cover kg of carcase weight produced per ha, concentrates fed per animal and fertiliser practice.