



CONTRIBUTED PAPERS - from 11.30 am Wed. 19th November

11.30 am – “Commercial prospects for livestock auction markets”

Dr. James V.H. Jones, Principal Lecturer and Head of Farm Management, Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester. (Author)

Abstract: *There has been intense commercial pressure on livestock auctioneers for a number of years from rising costs and reducing numbers of stock being sold through markets. There are a number of reasons for the decline in throughput but it is connected with changes in the farming industry as well as the use of alternative marketing channels. The commercial pressure combined with attractive gains from alternative uses for market sites has brought about a process of rationalisation involving a decline in the number of livestock markets. A number of markets did not reopen following the suspension of trading caused by foot and mouth disease in 2001. Whilst times have remained challenging the reduced number of markets gives opportunities for those that remain to source stock from a wider catchment area. Some have also been very innovative in developing multiple site use as a form of diversification.*

12.00 pm – “Mitigation Options for Phosphorus and Sediment (MOPS): Determining the cost effectiveness of in-field mitigation options at the farm level”

Dr. Alison Bailey, Lecturer in Agricultural Business Management, School of Agriculture, Policy & Development, University of Reading. (Co-author)

Abstract: *The Defra funded Mitigation Options for Phosphorus and Sediment (MOPS) project (PE0206), using three case study sites, investigated the effectiveness of specific control measures in terms of mitigating sediment and phosphorus loss from combinable crops. To determine the cost effectiveness of the approaches, simple financial spreadsheet models were constructed at both farm and regional levels. Taking into account the crop areas, average net returns per hectare were calculated to reflect the costs of crop establishment, fertiliser and agro-chemical applications, harvesting, and the associated labour and machinery costs. Variable and operating costs associated with each mitigation option were then incorporated to demonstrate the impact on the relevant crop margins and average net return per hectare. These costs were then compared with data on the runoff, sediment and phosphorous loss from the field monitoring to determine how effective and hence cost effective the options were.*

12.30 pm – “Music as a Metaphor: a powerful tool in leadership development”

Martyn Warren, Director of Rural Futures Unit, University of Plymouth. (Author)

Abstract: *Since 1996 the Worshipful Company of Farmers has sponsored an annual two-week course, The Challenge of Rural Leadership, originally designed and run by the University of Plymouth, and now operated by Duchy College in partnership with the University. For the last eight years the course has included a session titled Music as a Metaphor for Management. The unsuspecting attendees – 18 mid-career farmers, farm managers and associated professionals – find themselves engaged in a variety of rhythmic and melodic exercises, culminating in performance of a four-part round at the end of an hour or so. At each stage reflection is encouraged on relevance to team-work and team performance. During the evening the attendees sit in on a rehearsal of Voces, a high-quality choir, in Buckfast Abbey, observing both director and directed. A debrief session the next day identifies lessons learned, insights gained.*

Since its inception this has proved one of the most influential and highly-praised elements of the course. The reasons for this will be explored in the presentation of this paper, supported by course evaluations, synthesis of feedback, and audio-visual clips.

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