Fact Sheet 7

Climate Change Focus Farmers; David and Morag Houstoun, Glenkilrie, near Blairgowrie

Glenkilrie is owned by David and Morag Houstoun and covers some 1000 hectares (ha) at the bottom of Glenshee in Perthshire. David and Morag produce beef and lamb on their farm from 140 suckler cows and 1000 sheep split into two flocks. You can even spend a night at Glenkilrie, as David and Morag also run a bed and breakfast business.

Glenkilrie is one of four farms taking part in the Scottish Government funded Farming for a Better Climate initiative.

What steps are being taken at Glenkilrie to help to combat climate change?

Glenkilrie is used as a kind of test bed for exchanging ideas. Expert speakers are invited to give advice on a range of activities. Here are some of the ideas that have been discussed at farmers meetings:

- Cattle and sheep diets - The quality of the grass silage made over the summer months can vary from year to year. By analysing how nutritious each batch of silage is farmers can work out how much their livestock will need over the winter months, providing a balanced diet with reduced waste.

- Energy and fuel use on the farm - By measuring and monitoring energy use you can get an idea of how much is used on each job. It was discovered that heating the farmhouse was quite expensive. A wood fired boiler will be much cheaper and reduce the need to use heating oil.

- Growing grass - Most farmers grow grass but grass grows best on healthy soils. David and Morag make sure their soils are regularly tested to ensure they are adding the right amount of muck and fertiliser to the areas where they are needed most.

- Sheep health - David and Morag have a lot of sheep! Keeping them in good condition, properly fed and free from pests and diseases makes sure they will be able to raise a healthy crop of lambs.

Want to find out more?

Pick up a leaflet about Farming for a Better Climate at Stewart Tower or visit www.farmingforabetterclimate.org

Get in touch

We would love to know what you think. Email the project at climatechange@sac.co.uk. You can follow Farming for a Better Climate on Twitter at #SACFarm4climate and keep up to date with Stewart Tower on their facebook page via www.stewart-tower.co.uk