Upper Nisbet in the Scottish Borders is a mixed farm, run by Robert and Jac Neill. Robert and Jac grow 242 hectares (ha) of crops including winter wheat, winter barley, spring barley and beans. They have 202 ha of grass and rent an additional 80ha of grass on a neighbouring farm. This helps feed 300 Limousin-cross cows bred for beef. Robert and Jac are looking at steps arable (cropping) farmers can take to reduce greenhouse gases which would also help the farm.

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

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

Other local farmers use Upper Nisbet as the focal point for exploring some of the measures that can improve efficiencies suitable for farms in the area. These efficiencies also reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Meetings are practical, with plenty of time for discussion between farmers and expert guest speakers. Some of the ideas discussed at the farmer meetings have included:

- Producing renewable energy - Upper Nisbet could benefit from a wind turbine and solar panels, but which is best? Robert and Jac have installed an anemometer to measure wind speeds to see whether a wind turbine is practical.
- Sat Nav for soils - By using GPS technology, Robert and Jac have been able to establish which parts of their fields need more fertiliser and which need less. This makes best use of the dung produced by stock on the farm and reduces the use of expensive artificial (inorganic) fertiliser which uses a lot of energy to make.
- Healthy soils - The group has studied how to identify and remedy soil problems. This has reminded them just how important the role of soil is in getting the best out of a farm.

One hectare is equal to 10,000m². That’s about the same size as an international rugby pitch, including the area behind the goals (10,080m²).

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.