

WELSH FARMING IN THE MEDIA

Every month NFU Cymru secures positive media coverage on a variety of different platforms to ensure Welsh farming and the issues that matter to members in Wales the most remain in the media spotlight. Here's the top picks of coverage this month

Rural connectivity battle

NFU Cymru members Garry Williams and Abi Reader featured in a Ffermio news item looking at broadband connectivity in rural Wales. The item discussed the Welsh Government's rollout of the Superfast Cymru project and that many people are still not satisfied with the service they receive.

Garry Williams said that the rural broadband issue needed to be remedied to allow farmers to run their businesses effectively in the 21st Century.

Abi Reader explained that she has terrible problems with broadband despite living so close to Cardiff. She said that she couldn't get broadband to her milking parlour, which was causing her immense frustration.

You can read more on this story on page 13 of Farming Wales.



Highlighting the importance of good biosecurity after AI outbreak



Newly instated NFU Cymru Poultry Board Chair Victoria Shervington-Jones was interviewed by BBC Radio 4 for Farming Today and BBC Radio Wales' County Focus programme following news of an Avian Influenza outbreak in Warwickshire.

Speaking to Farming Today's Beatrice Fenton, Victoria spoke at length about the precautions they had taken at Ty Mawr Farm in St Brides to help protect their flock from wild birds while also maintaining the business' free range status.

In a separate interview with Country Focus presenter Rachel Garside, Victoria stressed the need for all poultry keepers to practise good biosecurity and to play their part in keeping bird flu at bay.

Speaking up for farming following hedgehog report

Following the release of the People's Trust for Endangered Species and British Hedgehog Preservation Society's joint report, The State of Britain's Hedgehogs, NFU Cymru Rural Affairs Board Chairman Hedd Pugh spoke as part of a debate on the subject on Radio Cymru's Taro'r Post.

The report claimed 'the intensification of agriculture through the loss of hedgerows and permanent grasslands, increased field sizes, and the use of pesticides which reduce the amount of prey available, are all associated with the plunge in numbers of hedgehogs in rural areas', but Hedd was quick to challenge these claims.

Speaking on Taro'r Post, Hedd highlighted the work that farmers do through environmental schemes to enhance habitats for wildlife, while also underlining that pesticide use has been steadily decreasing since 1990. Hedd also made the point that during the period of the hedgehog population's decline, the numbers of its predators – including badgers – have risen sharply.



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Challenging misconceptions about dairy

NFU Cymru members Abi Reader and Will Evans were interviewed on County Focus on BBC Radio Wales about 'Februdairy' and efforts to defend the dairy industry in the wake of abusive criticism from vegan activists. The 'Februdairy' campaign is seen by many as the antidote to the 'Veganuary' movement in January which encouraged people to go vegan for January.

During their interview with presenter Rachel Garside, both Abi and Will championed the many benefits of the UK dairy industry, including the health benefits of drinking milk and the £6bn contribution the industry makes to the national economy.

Both Abi and Will revealed that they had received online abuse when challenging misnomers from vegan activists via social media.



Concern over threats to wardens' service

NFU Cymru Rural Affairs Board Chairman, Hedd Pugh, was quoted in the Daily Post following reports that budget cuts in Snowdonia National Park Authority could affect the organisation's front line services.

As part of the article, Hedd Pugh raised the issue that visitor numbers to Snowdonia National Park had been increasing and that there was a 'responsibility' to ensure the situation was effectively managed.

He said: "As most of the land is in private ownership, much of it sheep walks, it would be irresponsible and a backward step for the authority to walk away from the good work of the past and make cuts to the wardening and access services."

Hedd Pugh also provided a comment to S4C's Newyddion 9 on the same story.



Farming Wales - March 2018