



Tuesday 24 November 2009

Cambrian Mountains Farmers check out their carbon footprint

Even in the farthest flung corners of deepest rural Wales, thoughts are turning towards how we can all play our part in what must follow from Copenhagen's Climate Conference in December.

More than 20 farmers are taking part in a pioneering project that will calculate the carbon footprint of their farm activities, leading to advice on how cuts in carbon emissions can be made.

The scheme is part of the Cambrian Mountains Initiative, a project which works with local farmers to promote sustainable rural development through the highest standards of environmental management.

Steven Bradley, the Countryside Council for Wales' Cambrian Mountains Project Officer will be visiting the farms in November. He said: "This carbon footprinting work extends the scope of existing farm carbon footprint tools to include carbon fluxes in agricultural soils and natural vegetation on farms, as well as considering the carbon footprint of bought-in feeds and fertilizers. A fuller picture of the role farms and land management play in reducing emissions will emerge."

The footprint analysis, being carried out by Bangor University, will provide hints and tips on how to reduce each farm's footprint.

Steven added: "We are delighted that the farming community has embraced this project. If there are considerable savings – in terms of emissions emitted as well as financial benefits – we hope the model can be applied in other areas."

Gwern Evans, the Cambrian Mountains Initiative Business Manager said: "The Cambrian Mountains is a region already associated with producing high quality food and we are looking to develop opportunities where we can

strengthen the green and sustainable credentials of our region's produce. We hope that the findings of this work will demonstrate that the region's products are not only tasty but also sustainable. We will also use this research as a platform to explore new ways of reducing agricultural carbon footprints in the region."

The Cambrian Mountains Initiative is a collaborative project involving the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG), Countryside Council for Wales (CCW), The Prince of Wales and his Charities, Tourism Partnership Mid Wales, CADW, Forestry Commission, Environment Agency and the local authorities of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Powys. The Initiative is a working collaboration between communities, projects and all levels of the public, private and voluntary sector.

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For further information, please contact Helen Evans, CCW PR Officer on 01248 387377 or 07717225589. h.evans@ccw.gov.uk Interviews can be arranged with participating farmers.

More about the Cambrian Mountains Initiative:

The Cambrian Mountains Initiative aims to develop the value of the Cambrian Mountains brand; connect local producers to the consumer marketplace; promote the Cambrian Mountains as a tourist destination; care for the natural and built environments; and develop markets for eco-system services. Together, through this integrated programme of action, these activities will help support the social and cultural vibrancy of the area and help retain young people in local communities and to achieve a sustainable future for the Cambrian Mountains.

The Countryside Council for Wales is an Assembly Government Sponsored Body, working for a better Wales where everyone values and cares for our natural environment. More information about our work is available on www.ccw.gov.uk