

Grassland Management - Sustainability, Resilience & Opportunities

Cockle Park Farm

Tuesday 31st January 2023

The event was hosted at Newcastle University's Cockle Park Farm and was hosted by staff from ADAS and Newcastle University. The event was attended by 30 members of the local farming and agricultural advisory community, as well as representatives from the UK Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB). The event focused on communicating the results from SUPER-G field studies carried out in Northumberland (north east England), including practical perspectives from the farmers hosting the trials. Results from 5 different field trials and experiments were outlined, covering topics including the establishment and management of multi-species swards, supporting pollinators, and the effective use of livestock manures. This was followed by discussion to expand on the experimental results and reflect on farmers' experiences using similar management practices.



Following the presentations and discussions, James Standen, Director of Farms at Newcastle University, led a farm walk to view three of the field experiments and trials currently being conducted at Cockle Park Farm. These included "the world's longest-running grazing and hay cutting experiment", the Palace Leas long-term meadow hay plots, which have been monitored since 1896, as well as 'mob' grazing and multi-species sward plots. This offered opportunities for attendees to discuss the management

practices used in the experiments. Ecologists at Newcastle University also outlined the emerging results from these trials on the impact of different management practices on botanical diversity, invertebrates, birds and mammals. After returning indoors, an opportunity was given for all attendees to influence the content and format of future SUPER-G events through 3 breakout groups, with the key themes fed back to the whole group.

