

WALES FEDERATION OF YOUNG FARMERS CLUBS



TUESDAY, 10TH NOVEMBER 2020

MANIFESTO

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

FACILITATOR: Laura Elliott

PRESENT: Katie Davies, (Wales YFC chairman); Caryl Haf, (Wales YFC vice chairman); Katie Court, (Competitions chairman); Niall Evans, (International chairman); Aled Thomas, (Events and Marketing chairman); Dewi Davies, (Ceredigion); Clare James, (Rural Affairs chairman); Edna Jones, (Staff association representative) and Nia Lloyd, (Wales YFC director).

Katie Davies welcomed all members to the meeting and introduced Laura Elliott to all those present.

Laura facilitated a discussion with the following points noted;

- A manifesto is a public declaration of policy and aims.
- The 2021 Wales election is likely to be held in May, 2021.
- Party manifestos are likely to be launched 6-8 weeks ahead of the election.
- 2021 will see the first election that 16 & 17 year olds will be able to be part of and as a group we should consider this as part of our manifesto and how to encourage members to come forward and vote.

Consideration of the 2016 Wales YFC manifesto asks.

	Point	Comments
1	Food and farming in the curriculum As the national curriculum is revised (current timetable 2021), we want to see food and farming education included in the curriculum at Key Stage 2 level (or the level that replaces it) and through the Welsh Bacalaureate. Improved food and farming knowledge will deliver health, education and economic benefits to the whole of Wales.	Members believed that this point was still of relevance and should be considered for the 2021 manifesto.
2	Accreditation of informal learning We want to see more acknowledgement for and a growth in provision of informal learning opportunities to complement formal education; where possible and without changing its very nature, we should seek ways of accrediting achievements gained through informal education (for example nationally recognised credits for skills	Noted that recognition should be given of how Farming Connect has supported Wales and how it will be supported in the future. Accredited learning requires more recognition.

	gained through training and other activities in organisations such as YFC).	
3	<p>Change Welsh learning provision</p> <p>We want to see an investment in a range of informal learning opportunities and resources for Welsh learners, to enable Welsh learners to access the level of skills they require to play their part in a bilingual society. In the form of an app and other on-or off-line resources, the focus would be on practical skills, relevant to the situation in which the skills will be used.</p>	<p>The work achieved by 'Dysgu Cymraeg' was acknowledged. Wales YFC has a lot of case studies that highlight the informal learning that young people are offered through the organisation.</p> <p>Since the manifesto Wales YFC has received funding for a language development officer and recently a report 'Iaith y Pridd' has been released that highlights the good work of YFC in this area.</p> <p>We need to consider what we want to see continuing and highlight what has worked well for us.</p>
4	<p>A route in to the agricultural industry</p> <p>We have welcomed and applauded previous approaches by the Welsh Government to introduce the Young Entrant Support Scheme. It has helped over 600 young farmers to date. We need to see this scheme expanded in future – it is currently closed to new applications.</p>	<p>Rather than a route into agriculture, the group agreed that the focus should instead be on how young farmers can be supported.</p>
5	<p>Focus support on active farmers</p> <p>The Single Farm Payment and other European Support programmes are essential in ensuring the farming industry can deliver public goods as well as maintaining a supply of relatively cheap food. We believe that the support programmes should be focused on active farmers and that this should be defined by minimum claim size in terms of land area and associated minimum stocking or cropping densities. Members believe that the minimum should be set at 5ha.</p>	<p>Grants need to be more accessible to young people.</p>
6	<p>Support to encourage Continuous Professional Development in farming</p> <p>All stakeholders involved, including the industry, academia and the Government need to work together to embed the ethos of Continuous Professional Development within the farming industry. It could and should start at school with more offering level 1 Agriculture as an option to study at</p>	<p>The group highlighted the work of Storfa Sgiliau and agreed that more apprenticeships in agriculture should be offered.</p>

	<p>school. Level 2 apprenticeships need to continue and encouraged so that more of tomorrow's farmers develop a habit of continually learning. We encourage the development of initiatives by the Welsh Government through Farming Connect and Lantra to encourage the industry to take CPD seriously to enable higher skills in all areas from practical issues to business planning, and would also call for support for increased recognition of informal learning, for example through the YFC, so that all forms of preferred learning styles are catered for.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p>A co-ordinated effort to achieve better supply chain integration and efficiency</p> <p>The market for food produce around the world is set for significant growth with the forecast growth in population and the likely growth in wealth that will lead to higher demand for animal protein and other higher value food products. Yet, the economics of food production in Wales is currently very challenging. Solutions will need to be found on a number of fronts including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation of food products to increase efficiency. • Greater skill in producing what the market requires. • Production in a way that also meets climate change goals. <p>Young farmers need to be at the centre of the changes needed in the long term, yet young farmers are seldom involved in the decisions at the business, industry and policy level. We call on Government (as well as industry parties) to involve young farmers in discussions and decisions on future direction.</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>Protecting the Youth Service budget</p> <p>The current youth service budget needs to be protected, to enable more people to access the support to help them develop personally. The investment will deliver great benefit to the economy and society generally.</p>	<p>Points 8, 9 and 10 could be amalgamated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Could we pick up on the point outlined in the CWVYS manifesto that a Minister for Children and Young People role should be created? - Legislation required that defines youth work as a statutory function for youth work in Wales. - Creation of a national body that brings together both the statutory and voluntary youth work sectors.

<p>9</p>	<p>Ensure good quality youth service provision to all rural young people</p> <p>We would like to see every young person be able to access physical youth work provision within a 15 mile radius of their home.</p>	
<p>10</p>	<p>Understand the value of informal learning</p> <p>Seek to develop partnerships with the voluntary provision, reconnecting with the enormous value provided by informal learning programmes to complement formal education, enabling young people to develop holistically.</p> <p>Work to develop more sophisticated methods of understanding outcomes that re focus on the long term, and more effectively value the contribution of informal education as part of a young person’s holistic development.</p>	
<p>11</p>	<p>The establishment of a rural support network</p> <p>Such a support network is required to support people at risk of the damaging effects of poor mental health that often goes unseen. The network could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A first responder scheme for vulnerable young people, developed in partnership between mental health professionals and volunteers who could provide initial help and support. - A peer support scheme. - Training / access to support to ensure young volunteers have the skills and information to be able to help. 	<p>The group where of the opinion that this point could be developed upon to focus more on the volunteering undertaken by the YFC and how that can support positive mental health. There is a need to have more support for the work undertaken.</p> <p>YFC have the ability to be proactive rather than re active in relation to mental health and have a big role to play in the support of young people in rural Wales and their emotional well-being.</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>Promoting options for rural housing for young people</p> <p>Policy makers and housing providers need to provide more, clear information to young people about the options available to them in order to access affordable homes, including social housing.</p>	<p>Points 12, 13, 14 and 15 considered together with it agreed that the importance for accessible housing should be emphasised.</p> <p>Unoccupied houses can get Welsh Government support.</p> <p>Young people in agriculture require priority access in relation to planning.</p> <p>Agricultural ties should also be considered.</p>
<p>13</p>	<p>Local first housing policies</p>	

	<p>Social housing providers, in partnership with Welsh Government and local authorities should adopt, where appropriate and practical, local first housing policies, where local young people have a higher priority when it comes to social housing.</p>	
14	<p>More work to provide affordable homes where they are needed</p> <p>More efforts need to be collectively made to understand the need, and provide affordable homes in areas where people want to live, building on the drive from 'One Planet Living'.</p>	
15	<p>Reduce planning restrictions on redundant farm buildings</p> <p>Planning restrictions should be removed for people renovating redundant farm building for residential purposes.</p>	
16	<p>Quicker broadband speeds sooner</p> <p>A speeding up of the roll out of superfast broadband in rural Wales, and to ensure that there is support so that no-one who needs superfast broadband is in a not-spot.</p>	<p>The progress that has been made is not enough.</p> <p>The final 5% of the population are not supported by superfast broadband are those living in rural areas.</p> <p>More needs to be invested in technologies in this area.</p>
17	<p>Supporting future entrepreneurs as drivers of the rural economy</p> <p>The creation of resource centres for entrepreneurship and diversification, focused on the needs of young people entering the world of self-employment as a career choice.</p>	<p>Menter Moch as a case study was suggested.</p>
18	<p>Tailored business support for young people</p> <p>Specific, tailored support to encourage young people to understand what steps are required to turn business ideas into reality.</p>	<p>Although Big Ideas Wales is available, more specific support is required for the agricultural sector.</p>

Other points that were noted by the group for further consideration;

- We need to highlight our work with the wider communities of Wales and the important role that the YFC has to play.
- Food and Drink Industry. As producers should we consider this sector?

- Transport and the lack of support for rural areas.
- Climate change. As a youth organisation should we should take this into consideration.
- Succession surgeries to help facilitate conversations.
- Farm Safety. Rural young people have a role to play and greater emphasis should be placed on this, including; keeping people alive and mental health support.

The manifesto shouldn't be something that we consider just for a couple of months, it should be a living document that focuses the organisations attentions for the next four years.

Could we ask for people to endorse the manifesto through signatories, to demonstrate the collaboration of the YFC and the importance of the organisation to Wales?

Next meeting – 7.30pm Wednesday, 2nd December.