

'You Can Farm' - Sharing experiences to support new entrants to agriculture in Scotland

NEFERTITI: 'Networking European Farms to Enhance Cross Fertilisation and Innovation Uptake Through Demonstration'

- NEFERTITI is a 'Horizon 2020' project funded by the European Commission from 2018 – 2021 that aims to support on-farm demonstration activities and farmer-to-farmer peer learning.
- The project involves: 45 national 'hubs' on 10 themes in 12 countries. The James Hutton Institute is one of 32 partner organisations across Europe.
- The NEFERTITI project builds on the earlier PLAID and FarmDemo projects that involved demonstration farmers in Scotland and across Europe.

Full details of the project are available online:
<https://nefertiti-h2020.eu/>

Demonstration activities during 2019



Nithsdale Monitor Farm meeting

The Scottish NEFERTITI Hub has provided funding and facilitation support to knowledge exchange events held on farms, where the host farmers are new entrants to agriculture, and/or the topic relates to encouraging young people to consider farming careers. Rather than duplicate ongoing efforts, the NEFERTITI Hub aims to support initiatives for new entrants that are organised by agricultural groups, including the National Farmers' Union for Scotland's (NFUS) Next Generation Committee, and the Monitor Farm Programme.

During 2019, the NEFERTITI Scottish Hub supported the following demonstration activities:

- LEAF Open Farm Sunday at Clonhie Farm, Nithsdale, Dumfries and Galloway, and Bigton Farm, Shetland.
- A 'New Entrants Pod' at the James Hutton Institute marquee, the Royal Highland Show, Ingliston.
- A New Entrants panel discussion at Arable Scotland, Balruddery Farm, Dundee.

The **Scottish NEFERTITI Hub** is part of the project-wide network focussed on farm attractiveness for new entrants to agriculture. The Scottish NEFERTITI Hub focuses on three key areas of concern in Scotland:

- The long-term sustainability of sheep farming in Scotland, which has traditionally been a route into farming for new entrants and is currently under-threat with changing policy and markets.
- Access to land and access to capital, and potential innovative routes for new entrants.
- New business models, products, and farming types developed by new entrants, and opportunities for diversification.

The Scottish NEFERTITI Hub aims to establish a network of people involved in Scottish agriculture with 'shared experiences and expertise to share' regarding these three concerns, through on-farm demonstrations, discussions, and mentoring for new entrants.

The Scottish NEFERTITI Hub is linked with the activities of the H2020 NEWBIE project in the UK, which aims to facilitate the development and dissemination of new business models, for all new entrants – from successors to complete newcomers - to the agricultural sector. Further information can be found here: <http://www.newbie-academy.eu/>

- A meeting of the Nithsdale Monitor Farm including visitors from other 'You Can Farm' NEFERTITI hubs from Ireland, Hungary, Belgium and Germany.

The final on-farm demonstration in 2019 supported by the NEFERTITI Hub was held at Ernespie Farm Centre, organised by the NFUS' Next Generation Committee in Dumfries and Galloway, where the new entrant dairy farmer provided a farm walk and presentation on his family's diversification enterprise to build a children's soft-play and outdoor area.

The NEFERTITI project involves an annual cross-visit for each theme. For the Scottish Hub, this provides the opportunity to share experiences and 'cross-fertilise innovations' with other new entrant farmers across Europe. The Scottish Hub Cross-Visit was held from 25-27th September 2019 and included visits to share farmers Stephen Withers and Neil Sandilands at Upper Hundalee Farm, Jedburgh, as well as learning from the demonstration methods used at the Nithsdale Monitor Farm meeting at Clonhie Farm.

Key lessons from Scottish NEFERTITI Hub activities - 2019

There are two main outcomes from the Scottish NEFERTITI Hub's support for on-farm demonstrations (on-farm demos) during 2019. Firstly, successful on-farm demos rely on an inspiring and dynamic host farmer, who is willing to openly share their experiences as a new entrant. For example, the NEFERTITI host farmers in Scotland have described the pressure of starting a farm on their family life and managing local expectations. These direct and personal insights are valuable to those participating in the on-farm demos, they build trust between the host farmer and the on-farm demo participants and share key lessons with aspiring new entrant farmers that can support their future resilience.

The second outcome is regarding practical recommendations to support new and young people to pursue a career in Scottish agriculture. An emerging theme from the on-farm demos hosted by new entrant farmers is the belief that 'cooperation rather than competition' is vital to their success. Such collaboration can include establishing joint venture enterprises, for example share farming or partnerships between 'aspiring and retiring' farmers, or new tenancies for smaller farm units on large estates. This model of cooperation is an area of growing interest within Scottish agricultural and land policy; the Scottish Government recently announced the establishment of a Scottish Land Matching Service, to support increasing land access by new entrants to agriculture. Learning from the NEFERTITI demo-campaign in Scotland will seek to support and inform this initiative.

NEFERTITI Scottish Hub Demonstration Events in 2020

Each year the project seeks to co-host and support at least 5 demonstration activities on farms across Scotland that align with the themes of the Scottish Hub. Understandably, due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, it is not possible to plan on-farm demonstration events until restrictions relating to the virus outbreak are lifted in accordance with Government guidance.

Instead, the project will support ongoing virtual demonstration events and on-farm demonstrations planned for later this year. **Please contact Annie with any suggested virtual demonstration events that NEFERTITI can support with resources or facilitation.**

The **NEFERTITI Scottish Hub will host a webinar discussion on 'New People, New Pathways – Routes into Arable Production and Alternative Crops'** at this year's **Arable Scotland**, which will be held entirely online on 2nd July. Further details are available here: <https://www.arablescotland.org.uk/>

The **NEFERTITI Scottish Hub will also host a workshop on the topic of 'Opportunities for New Entrants'** at the **National Sheep Association's 'ScotSheep 2020'**, an on-farm demonstration event. **This event has been postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak.** Further information can be found here: <https://www.nationalsheep.org.uk/nsa-scotland/scotsheep/> If you would like to participate in this workshop, please contact Annie McKee (NEFERTITI Scottish Hub Coach).

Further updates on demonstration events will be shared on the NEFERTITI platform: <https://nefertiti-h2020.eu/NefertitiPortal/#!/app-h/events> and the NEFERTITI Scottish Hub Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/NEFERTITIScottishHub/>



Arable Scotland

In September 2020, the Scottish NEFERTITI Hub will visit demonstration farmers in Ireland – all hub members are warmly invited to participate in this cross visit.

Connecting with the Scottish NEFERTITI Hub:

To learn about innovations relevant to new entrants to agriculture across Europe, as well as other training and demonstration opportunities within Scotland (and beyond), please register on the NEFERTITI demonstration platform, either as a 'demonstration farmer' or 'innovation actor' (i.e. farm advisor, industry representative, etc.).

- To register as a 'Demo Farmer', please [click here](#) or as an 'Innovation Actor', please [click here](#) or follow links via the NEFERTITI webpage: <https://nefertiti-h2020.eu/>
- Tick 'Farm Attractiveness' option (this is the new entrant theme).

Please 'like' the Scottish NEFERTITI Hub Facebook page for ongoing project updates and to connect to other Hub members: <https://www.facebook.com/NEFERTITIScottishHub/>

Please contact the Scottish Hub Coach (Annie McKee) if you would like support for an on-farm demonstration activity that will involve new entrants to agriculture. This year we plan to support at least 5 demonstration activities – we look forward to hearing your ideas.

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