

Annual Report 2019/20

Driving Excellence
and Innovation



Legal & Administrative Information

Trustees

Mr F Allen
(retired 27 April 2020)
Mr M Bell
(retired 25 November 2019)
Mr C Donnelly
Mr C J Henning
Mr J Martin
Mr W Mayne
Mr S McCaffrey
Mr P Morrow
Mr A Wilson
Mrs J E Dobson
(appointed 17 June 2019)
Mr J M Blair
(appointed 17 June 2019)
Mrs V McConnell
(appointed 01 April 2020)
Mr D Rea
(appointed 27 April 2020)

Secretary

Jason Rankin

Charity Number

NIC102341

Company Number

NI35855

Registered Office Innovation Centre

Large Park
Hillsborough
Co. Down BT26 6DR

Auditor

Aubrey Campbell & Co
631 Lisburn Road
Belfast BT9 7GT

Bankers

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Newtownards
Co. Down BT23 7DP

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Donegal Square West
Belfast BT71 6JS

Solicitors

J McKee & Sons
The Linenhall
32-38 Linenhall Street
Belfast BT2 8BG

Advisors

Beef Advisory Committee

Arthur Callaghan
Jonathan Carson - Vice Chair
Sam Chesney - Chair
Andrew Clarke
John Egerton
Ray Elkin
David Gibson
George McAuley
Stuart Mclvor
Nigel McLaughlin
John Payne
William Sherrard
Ian Stevenson
James Taylor
Alan Turkington
Maurice Watson
Graeme Campbell (non-voting
CAFRE liaison)

Dairy Advisory Committee

Claire Beckett
David Dunlop
Adrian Houston
Laura Kennedy
Andrew Magowan
Robert Martin (Carryduff)
Robert Martin (Spa)
Alan McCay
Drew McConnell - Chair
James Purcell
Gary Thompson
Stewart Watson
Thomas Steele - Vice Chair
David Stewart
Don Morrow (non-voting CAFRE
liaison)

Sheep Advisory Committee

Edward Adamson - Chair
Roger Bell
Crosby Clelland
Stuart Cromie
James Davison
Thomas Gibson
Nigel McLaughlin - Vice Chair
Kenneth Linton
Colin Smith
Dr Raymond Steen
Campbell Tweed
David Wallace
Graeme Campbell (non-voting
CAFRE liaison)

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Chairman's Report

John Henning,
Chairman 2019-20



AgriSearch continues to deliver for the ruminant livestock sector in Northern Ireland working to improve efficiency, innovation and profitability on farms by maximising the uptake of research funded by our levy income. Through leveraging external funding and working with partners we have now seen total research spend over the past 20+ years exceed £62m.

We remain a local independent organisation established by farmers for farmers and are conscious of our responsibility to manage finances wisely and maximise research 'value' from the farmers levy that we spend. Key to this success has been using the multi-actor approach and our ability to work with many partners including AFBI, AHDB, CIEL, DAERA, IGFS, and others to deliver for the ruminant livestock sector.

During 2019/20 we generated levy income of £431,192 from beef, dairy and sheep farmers and in the year commissioned six research projects costing £236,780 with further funding of £953,411 sought from DAERA and other partners.

Knowledge exchange remains a key focus as we endeavour to communicate our research findings to farmers and industry via booklets, social media and events. During the year we organised four farm walks and seven events at livestock marts which

were very well received. We continue to explore new communication channels, including webinars and YouTube, in order to maximise our reach and improve research uptake and implementation.

Farming and food continue to face challenging times and it is increasingly important that scientific evidence from research is used to help sustainability on farms and counter some of the misinformation about our grass-based beef, dairy and sheep farming systems.

Staff continue to play a key role in the success of AgriSearch and in 2019/20 we appreciated the efforts of Jason Rankin ably supported by Denise Aiken and Karen Rainey (CSL). During the year we said farewell to Elizabeth Earle and Nicola Annett and welcomed Jillian Hoy who was later joined by Sarah Brown and Kerry Given. On behalf of AgriSearch we thank each for their contribution and extend our best wishes to those who have moved to pastures new.



Congratulations and best wishes to new Chair Seamus McCaffrey as he takes up the reins of the organisation. We thank Fred Allen and Michael Bell for their service as Trustees and welcome Martyn Blair, Jo-Anne Dobson, David Rea and Val McConnell to the Board and look forward to their contribution.

I would also take this opportunity to thank my fellow Trustees for the opportunity to lead the organisation over the past two years. It has been an honour and privilege to play a small part in keeping farmers at the centre of what we do and ensure knowledge exchange is maximised so that the positive messages from our research are utilised on farm to improve the efficiency, profitability and sustainability of the sector.

Since the year end we have embarked on a major strategic review of our research, development and knowledge exchange activity to ensure we are fit for purpose in a changing landscape for farming

and food. This entailed wide-ranging consultation involving farmers, our advisory committees, stakeholders and an expert panel led by Professor Nigel Scollan from QUB. We are grateful to all those who contributed to this work. We are now finalising the implementation plan for our new strategy and will continue to work with farmers, industry, academia and government to bring these plans to fruition.

Going forward AgriSearch remains relevant with our independence valued by farmers in delivering for people, planet and profit. For AgriSearch, In the words of Sir Winston Churchill, ‘... this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.’



General Manager's Report

Jason Rankin

General Manager, AgriSearch

Research Funding Streams

It is widely acknowledged that on its own the levy income AgriSearch receives is unable to fund significant levels of research. The total AgriSearch levy income in 2019/20 was £431,192 and it is not uncommon for research projects to cost well in excess of a million pounds. AgriSearch has therefore always sought to leverage as much external funding as possible.

External funding for research is usually obtained through funding calls which can be irregular in nature with the numbers of open calls fluctuating between financial years. For example, the 2017/18 financial year saw a considerable increase in the number of research calls being open for funding which AgriSearch took full advantage of and were successful in obtaining funding through a wide range of sources. As is common, some of these projects were then only commissioned during the following financial year. More recently the number of research calls has fallen with both DAERA's Research Challenge Fund and the Agri-Food Quest Competence centre not currently being open for new applications. In addition, DAERA's Evidence and Innovation Strategy has been increasingly focused on meeting the policy needs of the Department with the most recent call being focused primarily on short-term literature reviews thus diminishing the potential to commission large scale production studies.

During 2019/20 AgriSearch commissioned 6 projects totalling £236,780 on the basis that complimentary



funding in the region of £953,411 would be sought from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and other sources. I would like to acknowledge the help and assistance of our academic partners without whom this would not have been possible. Three further projects were approved by Trustees during the 2019/20 financial year but were commissioned after the year end. This now brings the total value of research commissioned by/participated in by AgriSearch to over £62M.

The projects commenced during 2019/20 are:

- Impact of rearing regime on the sensory quality of sirloin from young bulls
- Tempergene: A literature review on the effect of genetics and environment on cattle temperament and its selection potential for improvement in behavioural characteristics to improve health and safety on-farm
- iTEMiD - Intelligent Total Management in Dairying
- GrassCheck Beef & Sheep 2020
- EcoSward
- Understanding Dairy Cow Behaviour to Improve Production and Welfare in Robotic Milking Systems

Further details on these projects are contained later in this report starting on page 12.



Centre for Innovation Excellence in Livestock

AgriSearch continued its involvement with the Centre for Innovation Excellence in Livestock (CIEL) and has developed a good working relationship with the staff in the centre.



Agri-Food Quest Competence Centre

AgriSearch has continued its involvement in the Agri-Food Quest Competence Centre. Agri-Food Quest is a membership-based, industry-led Innovation Centre for agri-food businesses in Northern Ireland. The centre is focused on increasing the level of collaborative research activity to support industry growth.



SUPER-G: Developing sustainable permanent grassland systems and policies.

Throughout the year AgriSearch continued its involvement in the Super-G project (which is the largest project in our portfolio). This Horizon 2020 project involves 20 partners from 14 countries and has a total budget of €10M over 5 years. Between AgriSearch and AFBI almost €1M is being spent in Northern Ireland. The main objective is to develop integrated approaches for permanent grassland management that are cost-effective, environmentally sound and easily manageable.

The project will:

- Define systems
- Benchmark
- Provide decision-support tools for farmers, advisors and policy makers.
- Influence policy





Resilience for Dairy (R4D)

Following on from the EuroDairy project (which finished in January 2019) which received positive feedback from DG Agri a consortium was formed to take forward a bid for a new EU Horizon 2020 “Thematic Network” to follow on from the EuroDairy project. This project is entitled “Resilience for Dairy” (R4D). There are 17 partners from 15 countries.

The application was successful and the project will start on 1st January 2021.

The overall objective of R4D is to develop and to strengthen a self-sustainable EU Thematic Network on “resilient and robust dairy farms” designed to stimulate knowledge exchanges and cross-fertilisation among a wide range of actors and stakeholders of the dairy industry. The aim of R4D is to widely disseminate relevant ready-to-use best practices based on innovations, facilitating knowledge exchange from farmers to farmers.

The topics it will address are:

1. Economic and social resilience
2. Technical efficiency
3. Environment, welfare and society friendly production systems

Building on EuroDairy Experience. R4D will build on and use the outputs of EuroDairy, the Interreg

project Dairy4Future, the EIP-AGRI Focus Group on Robust and resilient dairy production systems”, relevant knowledge coming from a set of dairy EIP-AGRI Operational Groups and other European projects. R4D will also tackle new emerging issues such as the circular economy and feed/food competition. R4D will put a greater emphasis on translating and adapting the relevant solutions into easy-to understand best-practices as well as educating, training, testing and demonstrating methods to improve socio-economic resilience.

R4D will build on EuroDairy’s Multi-Actor Approach with a strong involvement of farmers, farmers organisations, advisory services, researchers, economic actors of the dairy industry and policy makers.

Constellation Bid

AgriSearch was invited to participate in a large consortium bid for InnovateUK Funding under the Transforming Food Production Programme. This call was entitled: ‘Towards Net Zero Emission Productive Food Systems by 2040’.

The proposed bid was to look at the role of sensors to benchmark and help farmers improve their performance (especially with regard to carbon footprint). This would have included the use of digital twins to model the impact of changes in farming operations on climate change and the wider





ecosystem services. It had also been planned to develop automated and auditable systems for capturing, integrating and sharing environmental and natural capital data and create the technical and legally compliant infrastructure to facilitate payments for environmental services directly to farmers. It also sought to provide farmers with tools that will provide insight and intelligence to optimise the balance between farm productivity and revenue streams for the provision of ecosystem service models.

While the application was unsuccessful communications have continued with project partners to look at other opportunities for advancing this work and much of the proposed methodology has been incorporated into the FeedUK proposals being developed by the UK Food and Drink sector council.

Knowledge Exchange

A series of four dairy and beef farm walks were held during April and May in conjunction with AFBI and CAFRE on the farms of GrassCheck pilot farmers in Pomeroy, Randalstown, Rosslea and Castlewellan. Around 500 farmers attended these walks.

In conjunction with AFBI, CAFRE and the LMC AgriSearch organised a series of seven livestock

mart based events for beef and sheep farmers over the year. In May and June three events on the theme of breeding for performance were held in Ballymena, Clogher and Draperstown. In September four events focusing on finishing beef and lamb were held in Swatragh, Hilltown, Ballymena and Markethill. These events proved very popular with capacity turnout and several events. Our sincere thanks to each of the livestock marts for making their premises available.

In addition, AgriSearch engaged with farmers through its trade stands at the Royal Ulster Winter Fair and the RUAS Beef & Lamb Championships.

A comprehensive dairy calf rearing guide and a booklet on beef housing systems were launched at the Winter Fair.

Staffing

Elizabeth Earle (Project Manager) and Nicola Annett (Super-G Project Officer) both left AgriSearch in early January 2020 to take up new roles at CAFRE. We wish them both well in their new roles. Jillian Hoy joined AgriSearch as Research Manager in March 2020 and Sarah Brown took up the Super-G Project Officer post in June 2020. Kerry Given, a Harper Adams student, joined us in July 2020 on a one-year placement to work on the aforementioned Tempergene farmer survey and to assist with our knowledge exchange activities.

Strategy Review

AgriSearch finds itself at a crossroads. To date we have sought to maximise leveraged funding. However, many of the funding sources we have successfully availed of in the past have come to an end. Those funding sources that remain tend to either be focused on government policy needs



or on the development of new commercial products and services and less oriented to the kind of farming systems research we are interested in. Since 1997 there has been no increase in dairy and sheep levy and only one increase in beef levy. The cost of livestock research has increased significantly and costs for a production study at AFBI Hillsborough can run well into seven figures and as a result we found ourselves making only a token investment in such work.

We also recognise that the landscape in food and farming has changes rapidly and AgriSearch needs to change. With this in mind since the year end AgriSearch has been undertaking a wide-ranging review of its research and development and knowledge exchange strategy to ensure that its work programme remains focused and relevant and

that it continues to deliver value for money for its farmer levy payers.

The first stage in this review included a farmer survey, workshops with our sectoral Advisory Committees, stakeholder engagement and an independent experts' group. I would like to thank all who have given so freely of their time to help us in this review process and in particular Professor Nigel Scollan who convened the independent expert's group.

AgriSearch is currently finalising the implementation plan for its new strategy and we look forward to working with a wide range of stakeholders across industry, academia and government to help deliver on these exciting new plans.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Trustees and members of the advisory committees for their invaluable commitment to AgriSearch. AgriSearch works with a wide variety of industry partners and I would particularly like to acknowledge Dunbia, AHDB, Sheep Ireland, AHWNI, LMC and Farm Vet Systems for their participation in AgriSearch led research projects.

CAFRE continue to assist with knowledge exchange through farms walks, mart events and with the distribution of printed material to farmers. They also continue to cut plots for the GrassCheck programme.

I would particularly like to acknowledge the ongoing support of Nigel Scollan, Ann McMahon and Stephane Durand at Queen's University Belfast and Debbie McConnell, Francis Lively, Steven Morrison, Aimee Craig, Aurélie Aubry and Conrad Ferris at AFBI.

A special mention must go to our growing network of pilot farmers and farmer co-researchers who play an increasingly important role in so many of our projects. Our strategy review process has highlighted the value of our farm network and on-farm research will play a central role in our new strategy.

Last but by no means least I would like to acknowledge the enormous contribution our staff members Denise Aiken, Jillian Hoy, Sarah Brown and Kerry Given. Each of them has shown diligence and initiative which has made my job much easier.

Conclusion

The pace of change in the ruminant livestock sector continues to accelerate and in these changing and challenging times the role of research, development and innovation has never been so important. The ruminant livestock sector is coming under unprecedented pressure, particularly with regard to the environment. Yet agriculture has great potential to deliver a wide variety of eco-systems services (e.g. carbon sequestration) to meet these challenges.

AgriSearch has recently adapted and grown to address these challenges and our new strategy has been devised to tackle them head on, guiding farmers on the “road to zero” and protect farming’s social license. Ultimately, however, we are still a small organisation with limited resources. It is only by working collaboratively with industry, our research partners, our enthusiastic and growing team of farmer co-researchers, and government that we can hope to achieve our aim – to make the Northern Ireland ruminant livestock sector more competitive, profitable and sustainable.



Projects Commissioned

Projects Commissioned by AgriSearch
between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020

Impact of rearing regime on the sensory quality of sirloin from young bulls

Project partners: AFBI

A previous AgriSearch co-funded study “Beef from Grass” investigated the impact on production parameters of an extensive, grass-based diet fed from 3 months (spring born calved) or 6 months (autumn born calves) to approximately 9 months of age, prior to finishing on a concentrate ration.

The use of a grass-fed diet during early life may impact the fatty acid composition, the antioxidants present in the meat and also the flavour of the cooked product, however, it is not known whether these changes will be retained during the finishing stage. If they are retained, this could enable NI farmers to sell an enhanced product.

The aim of the project is to determine if there is a residual benefit of early life grass-feeding on the sensory quality of beef sirloins, and to evaluate how this relates to fatty acid composition, flavour and antioxidant capacity.

Sensory profiling panels will be conducted on eight sirloins from each of eight treatments. Eight trained panellists will develop a list of attributes for evaluation of the samples and will score grilled steak from 64 animals.

In parallel, a PhD student will conduct analyses on fatty acids, flavour volatiles and antioxidant capacity, as part of their first year. Multivariate statistical methods will be used to determine how these attributes are affected.

This project will help our understanding as to how the feeding of a grass diet during early life will impact on the composition and sensory quality of beef will provide valuable additional information on the impact of rearing young dairy bulls on grass, prior to finishing on concentrate diets.



Tempergene: A literature review on the effect of genetics and environment on cattle temperament and its selection potential for improvement in behavioural characteristics to improve health and safety on-farm.

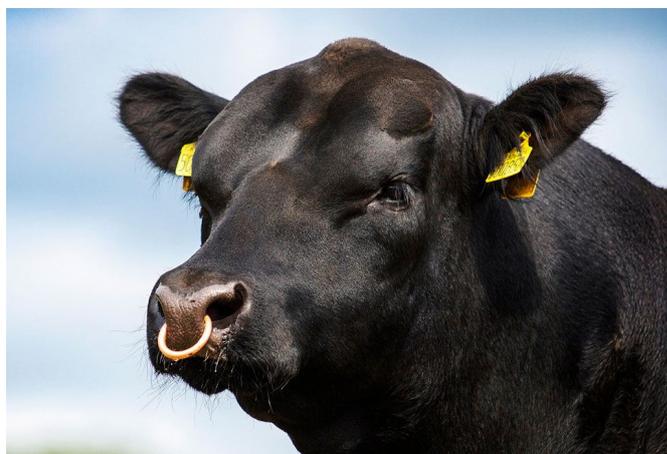
Project Partners: AFBI, DAERA, CAFRE, HSENI and UFU

The Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI) has reported over a quarter of farm fatalities which have occurred since 2000 have involved cattle, thus highlighting the importance of improving livestock farmers' health and safety within the industry. In order to address these concerns, a multi-stage approach is required, including the role that livestock genetics could play in improving the safety on farms. Improving the awareness of on-farm safety is necessary but not sufficient. Policymakers, animal breeders and industry need to assess and identify the risk factors and alternative solutions.

The "TemperGene" project has been funded by DAERA and AgriSearch with the aim of investigating the potential genetic approaches to improved cattle temperament and other desirable traits. It will assess the potential use of genetics to breed animals with better temperament and other behavioural traits to provide a permanent and cumulative solution.

The project consists of two work packages. The first is a literature review which will be performed to provide insight into the existing knowledge and evidence regarding:

1. The genetics of animal temperament and its genetic relationship with performance traits, and animal health and welfare, to propose proxy



traits for assessing cattle temperament and the implementation of cattle temperament in a breeding program.

2. The effects of environmental and managerial factors such as handling, facilities and farmer's attitude, their managerial actions on cattle temperament.

The second work package will involve a survey of suckler beef, bull beef and dairy farms from across Northern Ireland as well as across 9 slaughterhouses. The survey, designed by Agri-Food and Business Institute (AFBI), in collaboration with key stakeholders, and performed by AgriSearch will capture the number and severity of "near-misses" which may not have been recorded in HSENI's statistics. Additionally, it will examine farmers' attitudes towards animals with poor temperament, and their actions to improve farm facilities.

The outcomes will be used to improve our understanding of Northern Ireland cattle farms health and safety conditions, to make evidence-based policy, to improve farmers' awareness of safety on cattle farms, and to design multidisciplinary scientific projects to address this critical issue.

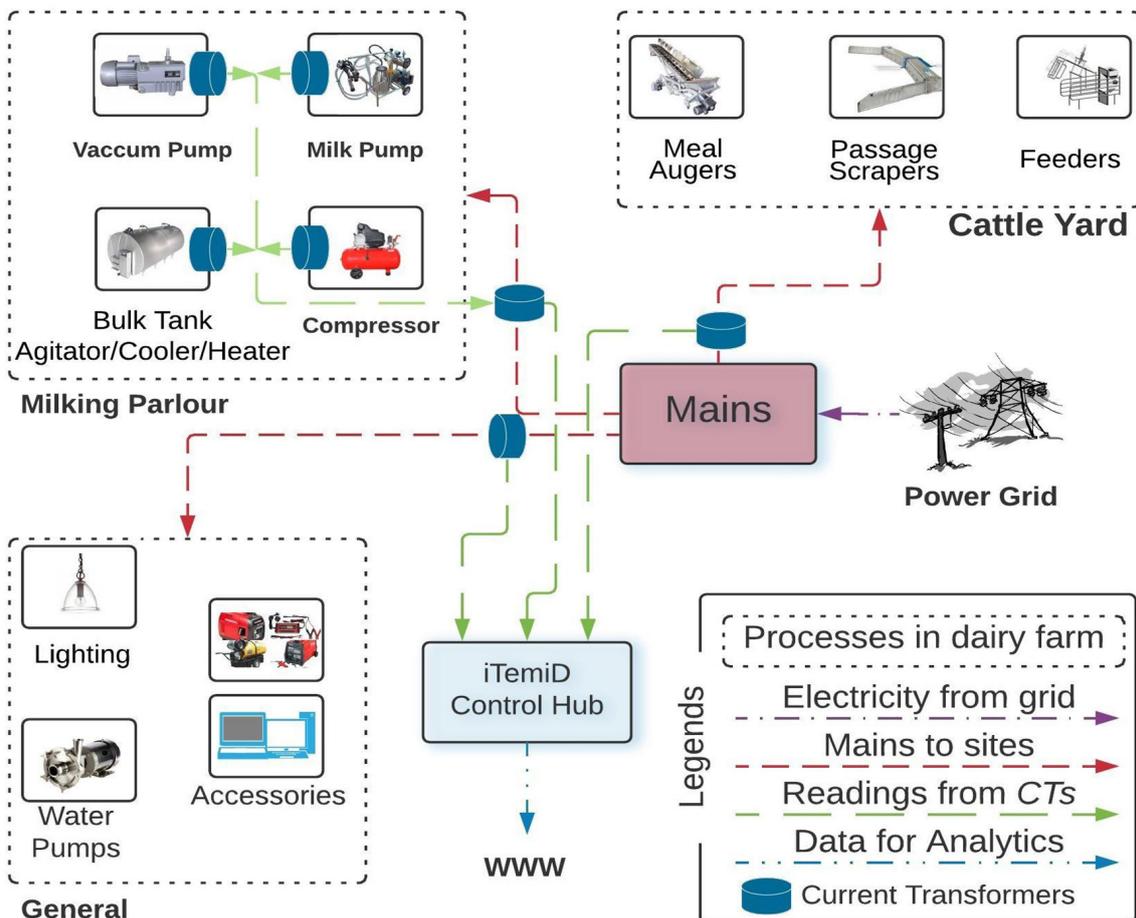
iTEMiD - Intelligent Total Management in Dairying

Project Partners: Ulster University, Dale Farm, CAFRE, UFU

Milk production is a major global farm-based industry which is at the core of food production in Northern Ireland, ROI and the UK. The primary fixed costs of farming are headage and farmyard facilities, while the cost of energy is the major variable expense after feed and labour with the potential to contribute to more than 20% of the cost of production, and adversely affect its carbon footprint. As global demand for fresh liquid milk and processed milk products escalates, the average headage per farm is growing dramatically (80% in N. Ireland over the past decade). The need to manage the energy

usage in these larger farm units has become critical. From initial discussions with the dairy farming community, there is a growing need for a low-cost energy monitoring and reporting system which would provide the dairy farmer with real time energy usage performance against established benchmarks for each major Energy Using Activity (EUA). Furthermore, this system could be optimised to indicate potential causes of deviant energy usage and recommend possible corrective actions.

The iTEMiD framework, will establish an effective methodology in production processes while monitoring energy consumption, milk handling processes, milk temperature and timing (scheduling) in dairy farming and offer unique and real time insight and visualisation of energy consumption during farm milk production. The iTEMiD framework



includes a hardware and software suite to acquire, store and process energy, milk temperature, along with equipment and production data. It utilizes hardware and software tools to achieve maximum throughput with reduced costs.

The overall aim of the project is to identify and analyse opportunities for energy reduction in farm milk production, providing aggregated data on the energy cost per litre of milk, with recommendations on potential savings. The project will develop a prototype intelligent low-cost real time energy monitoring system which will automatically measure and analyse the precise energy usage across the specific processes in farm milk production, and generate the associated reductions in energy usage, whilst meeting temperature constraints set by creamery collection operators.

Six dairy farms have been recruited with the assistance of Dale Farm. Ulster University are installing energy monitoring devices on these farms which will identify the electricity usage of key equipment (such as vacuum pumps, milk cooling, water heaters and pumps) on these farms. This information is fed back to the cloud and web interface is being designed to allow farmers to monitor and benchmark their electricity usage. Alerts will be set up to inform farmers when energy thresholds have been exceeded and take timely action.



GrassCheck Beef & Sheep 2020

Project Partners: AFBI

GrassCheck is AgriSearch's longest running programme. The format has altered over the years, however, measurements have always been taken from grass plots at Greenmount and Hillsborough which are fed into a weekly report for the benefit of farmers. In 2016 the wide variability in grass growing conditions present across Northern Ireland was highlighted and it was regarded as important that this variation was monitored and understood. In addition, GrassCheck was always modelled on dairy farming systems and an opportunity for including beef and sheep farms was identified.

GrassCheck Beef & Sheep began in 2017, jointly funded by DAERA and AgriSearch as part of the "Beef from Grass" project. This work package provided high quality grass growth and grass quality information from regions across Northern Ireland to assist farmers in making grass management decisions.

As a result of DAERA no longer co-funding GrassCheck Beef and Sheep, AgriSearch provided skeleton funding to allow the project to continue to operate over the 2020 season providing crucial grazing information to the industry. Funding for the plot and dairy elements of GrassCheck were covered by a separate project but these will also come to an end after the 2020 season.

EcoSward

Project Partners: AFBI

Farmers in Northern Ireland are increasingly facing financial, production and environmental challenges. Low profitability is a real threat to the viability of the NI livestock sector. Finding a suitable balance between maintaining profitable and sustainable livestock performance from grassland and improving farm ecosystem service provision is critical to sustaining farm businesses and the wider industry for the future. There is a growing body of evidence to suggest that increasing the diversity of plant species within grasslands can meet many of these challenges; delivering a wide range of ecosystem services, reducing management costs and positively influencing livestock production.

Multi-species swards (also referred to as species-rich or diverse grasslands) are communities comprised of grass, legume and herb species. By incorporating a wide variety of plant forms, with a range of rooting strategies, improve biomass productivity both above and below ground. This not only improves soil health but can also reduce the need for fertiliser input. Indeed research has shown that yields from

multi-species grasslands with low or no fertiliser input, are comparable to yields from low diversity, high fertiliser input systems. In addition, research has also demonstrated that multi-species swards can have an anthelmintic effect. This will improve animal performance whilst reducing medicinal use, further improving the potential for efficiency gains on farm. With regards wider ecosystem service provision multi-species swards may also positively contribute to climate mitigation and adaptation, improving carbon storage potential and reducing on farm GHG emissions. Improved water quality, flow and resilience may also be a feature.

With grassland being the predominant crop across Northern Ireland, incorporation of multi-species swards presents a significant opportunity for the livestock sector. Success will, however, be dependent on uptake and whilst the potential benefits of multi-species swards are numerous there is a distinct lack of information on their establishment and use on Northern Ireland commercial farms.

The Ecosward project aims to examine the potential role of multi-species swards in enhancing production and delivery of ecosystem services, including biodiversity and carbon sequestration,



on 8 commercial dairy, beef and sheep farms in Northern Ireland. The project will be carried out over 3 years, and the majority of farms established their herbal ley in spring 2020. The farmers sowed two seed mixes; the first mix contained perennial ryegrass and clover (a control), and the second mix contained perennial ryegrass, white clover, plantain and chicory.

The participating farmers will provide information on the establishment method they used, as well as weekly records of yield, weather, organic and inorganic fertiliser applications, plant protection products used and animal grazing behaviour. In addition, AgriSearch will collect data on soil carbon levels, species persistency and sward nutrient quality.

Key questions investigated will include:

- Can we successfully establish and maintain rich, more diverse MSS on Northern Ireland dairy beef and sheep farms with sufficient yield capacity and herbage/silage quality?
- Can grassland soils under MSS sequester and store more carbon?
- Is there an increase in soil microbial biomass and diversity as well as in the fungal component of the soil microbial community?
- How does grazing behaviour and performance differ on MSS?
- Can MSS be successfully integrated with conventional swards?
- How do MSS swards compare with conventional swards on input costs, output values and overall value for money?



Understanding Dairy Cow Behaviour to Improve Production and Welfare in Robotic Milking Systems (PhD Studentship)

Project Partners: Queen's University Belfast & AFBI

In Northern Ireland, dairy farming is a key industry with in excess of 2,500 dairy farms, yet increasing herd sizes and reductions in the agricultural workforce have placed an increasing pressure on both national and international labour. In response to this, there has been an increasing uptake of robotic milking systems making use of state of the art technology whereby cattle voluntarily visit an automatic milking machine. Such technologies hold the potential to improve dairy cow welfare and enhance farm labour efficiency.

However, despite recent uptake of robotic milking in Northern Ireland, with estimates that 10% of the national herd is being milked by robots (such numbers are expected to increase), there is a lack of knowledge regarding cow behaviour and milking frequency with robotic milking, with some cows not transitioning well to these systems and requiring prolonged training. These issues can have negative effects on cattle welfare and production. The success of robotic systems depends on the cows' voluntary behaviour, yet this remains to be fully understood.

Understanding and influencing cattle behaviour is the key to successfully implementing robotic milking of the dairy herd.



The overall aim of this project is to improve cow welfare and productivity in robotic milking systems by optimising the visit frequency to the robot.

More specifically, using three experiments, this project will address the following objectives:

- Assess the effects of changes in feed allocation on dairy cow behaviour and welfare in robotic milking systems.
- Use relevant learning theory to investigate training strategies to increase regular voluntary milking visits to the robot.
- Investigate training strategies to deter 'loitering' (cows remaining in the robot area unnecessarily, thereby blocking other cows' access).
- Evaluate strategies to encourage voluntary visits in animals that are lame and/or have a low social ranking.
- Evaluate the effect of the developed strategies on dairy cow welfare.

Trustees' Annual Report

Incorporating the Director's Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

The trustees; who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2020.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 3 to the accounts and comply with the Charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015).

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Nature of governing document and how charity is constituted

'AgriSearch' is the trading name for the Northern Ireland Agricultural Research & Development

Council, a charitable company, limited by guarantee with no share capital. It is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Methods to recruit and appoint new trustees

The Board of Trustees, who are also the Directors of the Charitable Company, are appointed by the Council. The Trustees appoint three Advisory Committees to consider and monitor appropriate research projects.

Nominations are also received from the Ulster Farmers' Union for three farmer Trustees. On behalf of processors (who are levy collectors) DairyUK and Ni Meat Exporters Association (NIMEA) nominate one trustee each.

Three farmer Trustees are recruited independently with the aim of ensuring that relevant differing aspects of farm husbandry are represented as far as possible and that there is wide representation across NI.



Members of Council

Standing from Left: Drew McConnell; Nigel McLoughlin; Martyn Blair; Fred Allen; Jo-Anne Dobson; John Martin; Wilbert Mayne; David Browne; Edward Adamson. *Seated from Left:* Michael Bell; Seamus McCaffrey; John Henning; Jason Rankin.

Additional independent Trustees are recruited who are not active farmers but have standing within the agricultural community and have experience of a commercial environment.

For the recruitment of 'independent' Trustees, the posts are advertised in the agricultural press and a local Board recruitment website and a selection process is carried out using pre-determined relevant criteria.

Members of the charity are approved at the AGM following nomination by the trustees/

While nominations for Trustees are received from the Ulster Farmers' Union, DairyUK and NIMEA, the final decision as to who to appoint is at the discretion of members of the charity.

Indemnity provision for trustees

Every member of the Charity undertakes to contribute such amount as may be required (not exceeding £1) to the Charity's assets if it should be wound up while he or she is a member or within one year after he or she ceases to be a member, for the payment of the Charity's debts and liabilities contracted before he or she ceases to be a member, and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up, and for the adjustment of the rights and contributories among themselves.

Trustees are also covered by a management and corporate liability insurance policy.

Organisational structure and how charity makes decisions

The Board of Trustees meets five times per year and each of the Advisory Committees meets when required to review funding and expenditure



proposals/The Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Senior Vice-Chairman and the General Manager and Management Accountant (engaged through Countryside Services) meet frequently to review the day to day operation and governance of the organisation.

The three advisory committees are made up of farmer members, independent scientific advisors and representatives of the processing sectors. The Beef and Sheep Advisory Committees also have a representative from the Livestock and Meat Commission for NI. Their role is to identify and evaluate research proposals and recommend projects to the Trustees. Each committee includes one representative of College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprises (CAFRE) in an advisor capacity.

The Trustees review all proposals from advisory committees, taking into account the finances of the organisation and the strategic direction before deciding to approve the recommendations or return them to the relevant committees for further consideration or rejection.



ADVISORY COMMITTEES (as of 31st March 2020)

Beef Advisory Committee

Arthur Callaghan
Jonathan Carson - Vice Chairman
Sam Chesney - Chairman
Andrew Clarke
John Egerton
Ray Elkin
David Gibson
George McAuley
Stuart McIvor
Nigel McLaughlin
John Payne
William Sherrard
Ian Stevenson
James Taylor
Alan Turkington
Maurice Watson
Graeme Campbell (non-voting CAFRE liaison)

Dairy Advisory Committee

Claire Beckett
David Dunlop
Adrian Houston
Laura Kennedy
Andrew Magowan
Robert Martin (Carryduff)
Robert Martin (Spa)
Alan McCay
Don Morrow (non-voting CAFRE liaison)

Drew McConnell - Chairman
James Purcell
Gary Thompson
Stewart Watson
Thomas Steele - Vice Chairman
David Stewart

Sheep Advisory Committee

Edward Adamson - Chairman
Roger Bell
Crosby Clelland
Stuart Cromie
James Davison
Thomas Gibson
Nigel McLaughlin - Vice Chairman
Kenneth Linton
Colin Smith
Dr Raymond Steen
Campbell Tweed
David Wallace
Graeme Campbell (non-voting CAFRE liaison)



How decisions are made

Decisions are taken by the Board of Trustees which meets at least four times a year. Meeting papers which include an agenda, minutes of the previous meeting, General Manager's report, financial statements and details of any project proposals being considered for funding are circulated in advance of the meeting.

Policies and procedures for induction and training of trustees

New Trustees are provided with information about the role and about the Council as part of an application 'pack'. Following selection, new Trustees have an induction briefing from the Chairman and General Manager which provides information and guidelines on their tasks and responsibilities together with an outline of the objectives of AgriSearch. They also receive copies of past Trustee minutes and other corporate documentation.

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management

A remuneration committee is appointed by the Trustees on an annual basis to consider the remuneration of key management. Its recommendations are submitted to the Trustees for approval.

The remuneration committee is currently made up as follows:

- Wilbert Mayne (Chairman)
- Seamus McCaffrey
- Andrew Wilaon

A Disciplinary and Grievance Committee has also been established to review the employee handbook and if necessary act as an appeal panel for disciplinary and grievance issues.

The Disciplinary and Grievance Committee is currently made up as follows:

- Colin Donnelly (Chairman)
- Peter Morrow
- John Martin

Relationships with related parties and other charities/organisations with which it coordinates in the pursuit of its charitable objectives

One Trustee, two members of the AgriSearch Sheep Advisory Committee and three members of the AgriSearch Beef Advisory Committee received payments during the financial year for activity undertaken as "farmer co-researchers", these are detailed on page 51 under Related Party Transactions. Farmer co-researchers are appointed on-merit in consultation with the relevant lead scientist.

AgriSearch has a conflict of interest policy and each Trustee and Advisory Committee member is asked to complete a declaration of interests. In addition, declaration of conflict of interests is a standing item at the top of the agenda for every meeting of Trustees.

The Charity has a relationship with Animal Health and Welfare Northern Ireland (AHWNI), a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee.

AHWNI seeks to benefit livestock producers and processors by providing the knowledge, education and coordination required to establish effective control programmes for non-notifiable diseases of livestock. On behalf of AHWNI, AgriSearch collects levy at the rate of 10 pence per bovine slaughtered in Northern Ireland and also provides contingency funding for AHWNI's BDV eradication programme.

AgriSearch also seeks to work with other levy organisations to share resources and avoid duplication of research and is currently involved in joint funding arrangements for two projects within the Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board (AHDB), a statutory levy board.



OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Charitable objective

The principle activity of the Council is to commission research and development in the agricultural industry. The Charity's objectives are to advance education, for the public benefit, in particular, by conducting and commissioning research into the improvement and development of beef, sheep and dairy farming and to disseminate and publish the useful results of such research and also to promote the improvement of animal health and welfare in sheep, beef and dairy farming in Northern Ireland.

Aims of the charity

Like all industries in the Northern Ireland ruminant livestock sector needs to advance to meet the challenges it faces. These include competitiveness in an increasingly globalised market, meeting government and consumer expectations in the fields of animal health and welfare, reducing the environmental impact of farming, delivery of ecosystem services and improving food quality and safety.

Research and innovation have a major role to play in helping farmers to increase their socio-economic resilience, improve their environmental sustainability and enhance the health status of their herds and flocks.

During 2014 - 15, the Trustees commissioned a complete review of AgriSearch's strategy and future direction. This included engaging with those involved in AgriSearch's committees as well as external stakeholders. The key elements of this new strategy are:

Purpose: To make the Northern Ireland Euminant Livestock sector more competitive, profitable and sustainable.

Vision: AgriSearch is committed to being an important driver of excellence and innovation in the Northern Ireland ruminant livestock sector, and being recognised as such by government and industry.

Mission: To realise this vision, our mission is to drive profitability and sustainability, as a trusted, valued conduit of knowledge and innovation based on sound science and widely applied research.

Values and Principles: Our values and principles below will be prevalent in all of our activities and reflected in all of our work.

- Honesty and integrity
- Ethical leadership and good governance
- Accountability to farmers - levy payer led
- Consultation, engagement and effective communication at all levels of government and the industry
- Collaboration and partnership across all our sectors
- Seeking value for money in all of our research and innovation projects and programmes
- Advocating excellence in all research, science and innovation activities.

How achievement of aims furthers objectives

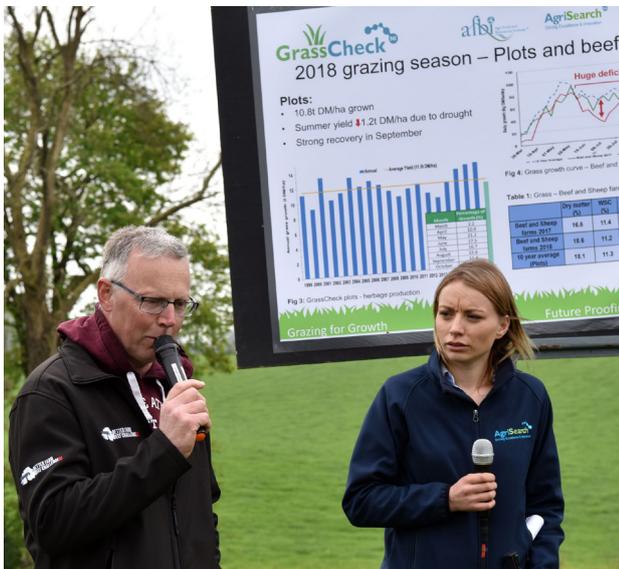
The Charity is dependent on the goodwill of its levy funders. Given this, the Trustees have put in place a range of systems to try to ensure appropriate research projects are commissioned, that research findings are innovatively disseminated and that feedback and engagement are sought. Innovative research and development is a key strategy within Government targets. AgriSearch is also committed to innovative research and development and aims to maximise its influence and impact. AgriSearch also seeks to collaborate with government and industry bodies within Northern Ireland and further afield. By doing so, we can gain leverage of our limited levy

funds to achieve much greater impact than working alone.

It is also the policy of the Trustees that the return on investment of the funds directed to research is analysed and measured to ensure optimum value for money on behalf of the Charity's funders. Increasingly, as research projects reach conclusion, greater emphasis is being placed on the dissemination of findings and the adoption by industry of the key recommendations into every day working practice. Environmental and animal welfare considerations continue to be more significant factors in the sustainability of farming and AgriSearch takes increasing notice of these factors.

Strategies for achieving aims and objectives

- Build understanding of global advances in production systems, practices and techniques, through the funding of new research, the sharing of knowledge and widespread innovation and development.
- Leverage funding and deliver programmes through collaborative research partnerships, actively seeking partners locally, nationally and internationally, and developing mutually beneficial relationships.
- Communicate more effectively and directly with farmers, increase the number of farmers we reach and increase their active participation.
- Facilitate bottom up, industry led priorities for research and innovation, based on need.
- Support the NI science community, working to ensure the future capacity and capability of NI scientists and agriculturalists.



Criteria or measures used to assess success

- Funding applied for and awarded, including partnerships
- Improvements in productivity and efficiency at a farm level
- Improvements in systems, processes and practices
- Increased profitability from farming ruminant livestock
- Reduced input, overhead and energy costs per unit of output
- Increased or more productive use of land
- Strength of AgriSearch profile locally and internationally
- Level of industry/farmer confidence in AgriSearch research models, methods and outcomes
- Strong collaborative relationships in government, in the agri-food industry, and in the scientific and academic community
- Increase in effectiveness of communication
- Value for money and impact on farming (economic and environmental)

Statement of compliance with Charity Commission guidance

The Charity has paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the Charity should undertake.

SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN

Main objectives for the year and strategies for achieving them

- To manage in conjunction with our research partners a comprehensive suite of research projects to ensure they meet the needs of the Northern Ireland ruminant livestock sector.
- To maximise the leverage of funds from sources outside AgriSearch.
- To increase the knowledge transfer activities of AgriSearch in co-operation with AFBI and CAFRE to improve the dissemination of AgriSearch funded research.
- To engage with other levy bodies in Great Britain and further afield to pool resources, avoid the duplication of research.

Grant-making policy

Investments in research programmes take into account value for money, affordability and the potential for the research to be adopted in practice of farms in Northern Ireland.

Any research policy must address at least one of the following key pillars:

- Sustainability / profitability
- Environmental Impact
- Animal Welfare / Health
- Food Quality / Safety

The Trustees also look for additional external funding in any research projects they approve.

This is mainly obtained through the Department of Agriculture's Evidence and Innovation Strategy and Research Challenge Fund programmes and more recently the InvestNI funded Agri-Food Quest Competence Centre. AgriSearch has also obtained funding from the European Union under the Horizon 2020 programme.

Use of volunteers

The Charity makes significant use of volunteers in the course of its work. In addition to the Trustees, the members of three sectoral advisory committees give freely of their time in attending and preparing for committee meetings as well as supporting AgriSearch in the events that it runs.

In addition, many of AgriSearch's research programmes are based on commercial Northern Ireland farms who only receive a small payment for the time they spend on these projects and who make their herds and flocks available for research as well as allowing access to farm records and hosting extensions on their farms.

The Trustees confirm that they have had due regard for the guidance produced on public benefit by



the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and are pleased to report that during the period the charitable company has continued to provide public benefits through the programmes and services we offer.

Strategic report

The following sections for achievements and performance and financial review form the strategic report of the charity.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Summary of main achievements

- Commissioned 6 new research projects (with funding approved for a further 3 projects)
- Successfully applied (as part of a consortium) for funding from the European Commission for funding for Resilience for Dairy (a thematic framework)
- Recruited farmer co-researchers to take part in a project on robotic milking systems
- Website continuously updated along with use of social media
- 2 dairy and 2 beef GrassCheck farm walks held during the year in conjunction with AFBI and CAFRE with over 400 attending these events
- 7 Beef and Sheep seminars held in livestock marts with over 800 attending these events with accompanying booklets produced for each event
- Used trade stands at the Royal Ulster Premier Beef and Lamb event and Royal Ulster Winter Fair to disseminate research results to farmers
- Published booklets on calf rearing and beef housing

- Completed a review of the role of the sectoral advisory committees and recruited new members for the committees
- Responded to the DAERA Stratgy Framework and Innovation Strategy Consultations
- Participated in a UK Wide bid for funding from InnovateUK under the „Transforming Food Production“ competition, taking the lead for the Knowledge Exchange work Package



Investment performance against objectives

Cash flow and reallocation of funds between accounts has been managed to maximise the limited returns available on deposit accounts. The Danske Bank (Davy) managed portfolio has returned satisfactory performance with a return of -7% this year. The St. James' Place managed portfolio has also returned satisfactory performance with a return of -13% this year.

While both investment portfolios have had a negative return during the financial year, their performance is still well above the market average. There has been a significant recovery in the value of both portfolios since the end of the financial year. The Trustees have reviewed the portfolio and returns and are satisfied with the management of risk and investment income.

Balanced picture of charity's progress against objectives

AgriSearch continues to be successful at leveraging a significant amount of funding from government and other sources. However, many funding streams which AgriSearch has availed of in the past are no longer open to new applications/ Knowledge exchange is a key component of our work. Over the course of the year we have run 11 successful knowledge exchange events. Nevertheless, we recognise that more progress needs to be made in this area and going forward intend to commit more resources to knowledge exchange.

Key performance indicators explaining outputs achieved by objectives

Given the straightforward nature of the business, the company's directors are of the opinion that analysis using KPI's is not necessary for an understanding of the development, performance or position of the business.

Significant positive and negative factors that affected the achievement of objectives and how future plans affected

Given the relatively small amount of levy income the commissioning of research projects is dependent on the availability of leveraged funding. Funding competitions for such projects do not follow a regular cycle. In the last two years there have been fewer funding calls open and those that have been open have not aligned particularly well with the goals and aspirations of AgriSearch. As a result of this the Trustees have instigated a major review of AgriSearch's strategy going forward.



FINANCIAL REVIEW

Review of the financial position at the end of the reporting period

The statement of financial activities for the year is set out on page 35 of this report. The net movement in funds for the financial year is net resources received of £98,566 (2019: net resources received of £188,273). During the year AgriSearch agreed to fund 9 projects totalling £259,431 on the basis that complementary funding in the region of £3,375,704 would be sought from the EU, Department of Agriculture, Environmental and Rural Affairs and other sources. When other sources of funding are added, the total expenditure on the related research and development since the formation of AgriSearch in 1997 is over £62m, with the input from AgriSearch amounting to £8.6m.

Significant events that affected financial performance and financial position during the period

Events during the year do not give rise to any material financial impact.

The Trustees monitor financial performance on a regular basis and take a low risk stance on finance. It is the Trustees' policy to achieve the best financial return on longer term funds with a prudent investing attitude whilst ensuring that sufficient funds are available to meet the operational expenditure of the organisation. Funds invested can be accessed at short notice. Financial risk is considered as part of

the Trustees' ongoing assessment of its operating environment and a risk register is maintained.

The organisation is largely dependent on a revenue stream from voluntary levies paid by farmers and agri-food processors. The risk to future financial performance based on this is regularly considered and assessed. Budgets are set for each financial year in light of this. At the end of the financial year, there are no events or circumstances which would significantly impact the organisation's future financial performance.



Investment Policy and Objectives

The investment policy is low risk. During the 2019-20 financial year the majority of funds were held in deposits across a number of institutions as agreed by the Trustees. A portion of funds which are not required in the short term continue to be invested within investment portfolios managed by Davy & St. James's Place. All funds are accessible at less than one week's notice.

Principle sources of income and how expenditure meets objectives

Principal funding sources are terms-of-trade levies collected on a voluntary basis by Northern Ireland processors of dairy, beef and sheep.



Reserves policy (including amount of reserves and why held, restricted funds, designated funds, free reserves against reserves policy)

The Trustees' have established a policy whereby the company's 'Free' reserves, being funds not committed to third parties for research should represent at least 12 months management and administration costs. At this level, the Trustees are of the view that the company would be able to continue its activities in the event of a significant drop in funding.

The level of reserves held at the year ended 31 March 2020 is £438,821. In addition, in order to ensure continuity of operations, further reserves are held for the ongoing commission of research. AgriSearch works with other stakeholders to ensure maximum leverage of funds. Reserves held can vary depending on the timing of decisions made by co-funders. The trustees consider that the present level of reserves adequately meets these combined objectives.

Risk factors

The Trustees are responsible for ensuring effective risk management, and that internal controls are in place to appropriately manage the risk exposure of AgriSearch. In September 2015, the Trustees completed a comprehensive review of AgriSearch's

risk management strategy. In the course of this review, the Board considered:

- the major risks to which AgriSearch is exposed;
- the potential impact and probability associated with each risk;
- existing internal controls and accountability for them;
- mitigating actions needed to reduce each risk to a level that the Trustees considered to be acceptable.

In light of the considerable changes that have occurred within the last numbers of years, a completely new and more detailed risk register was drawn up. This will continue to be formally reviewed by the Trustees every year and is regularly monitored by the Office Bearers' Committee.

The major financial risks are each subject to ongoing monitoring and management. AgriSearch investments are regularly reviewed by the Office Bearers. Income and cost control are subject to detailed review and challenge on at least a bimonthly basis. An annual budget for non-project related expenditure for the forthcoming year is placed before the Trustees for approval before the start of each financial year. During the year a Financial Control Document was drawn up and adapted by the Trustees and is kept under regular review.

AgriSearch is reliant on the co-operation of dairy and red meat processors to collect producer levies on its behalf. There have been continuing difficulties around the collection of dairy levy which resulted in a significant fall in dairy levy income for the 2015-16 financial year. AgriSearch has been actively addressing these issues in conjunction with other industry stakeholders and as a result dairy income has since improved.

Plans for future periods

- To conduct a comprehensive review of AgriSearch's strategy (including engagement with farmer levy payers, levy collectors and other key stakeholders)
- To continue our involvement in Super-G (a Horizon 2020 Project on Permanent Grassland)
- To commission the Resilience for Dairy (R4D) Horizon 2020 Thematic network
- To participate in the building of further networks and consortia to pool resources, avoid the duplication of research and draw down external funding
- To continue our membership of and involvement in the Centre for Innovation Excellence in Livestock
- To hold further K.E. events in collaboration with AFBI and CAFRE
- To seek to collaborate (where appropriate) with local industry in projects co-funded through the Agri-Food Quest Competence Centre
- To increase the reach of our knowledge transfer programme through further on-farm events, seminars and increasing traffic to the website and social media

- To further develop our communications and knowledge transfer strategy
- To engage with DAERA to ensure a high priority is given to research and knowledge transfer and ensure co-ordination of research and knowledge transfer activities and maximise synergies.

Trustees' Responsibilities Statement

The Trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standard (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which gives a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the applicable charities SORP;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business,



The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Auditor

Each of the persons who is a trustee at the date of approval of this report confirms that:

- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit, information of which the charity's auditor is unaware; and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

The Trustees' Annual Report and the strategic report were approved on 28 September 2020 and signed on behalf of the Board of Trustees by:



Mr C J Henning
Trustee



Mr S McCaffrey
Trustee

Independent Auditor's Report

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of the Northern Ireland Agricultural Research and Development Council T/A AgriSearch for the year ended 31 March 2020

OPINION

We have audited the financial statements of The Northern Ireland Agricultural Research and Development Council T/A AgriSearch (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2020 which comprise the statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account), statement of financial position, statement of cash flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102. The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2020, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act (Northern Ireland 2008).

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are

independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISA's (UK) require us to report to you where:

- The trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the charity's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least 12 months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for use.

Other Information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information, and except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements of our knowledge obtained

in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we concluded that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report on in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received by branches visited by us; or

- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to

influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK), we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit.

We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, internal omissions, misrepresentations or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention to it in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements, or if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our

opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charity to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair representation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's members, as a body, in accordance with section 65 of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Aubrey Campbell (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of
Aubrey Campbell Accountants Limited
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditor

30 November 2020

Financial Statements 2019/20

Statement of Financial Activities
(Including income and expenditure account)
for the year ended 31 March 2020

FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	notes	2020		2019
		Unrestricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
		£	£	£
Income and endowments				
Donations and legacies	5	636,417	636,417	625,179
Investment Income	6	24,421	24,421	22,380
Total Income		660,838	660,838	647,558
Expenditure				
Expenditure on charitable activities	7,9	501,333	501,333	462,295
Total Expenditure		501,333	501,333	462,295
Net (losses)/gains on investments	11	60,939	60,939	3,009
Net income and net movement in funds		98,566	98,566	188,273
Reconciliation of funds				
Total funds brought forward		340,255	340,255	151,982
Total funds carried forward		438,821	438,821	340,255

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 38 to 51 form part of these financial statements

Statement of
Financial Position

	Note	2020 £	2019 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets	16	3,491	4,142
Investments	17	587,199	648,129
		<u>590,690</u>	<u>652,271</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	18	335,963	344,596
Cash at bank and in hand		244,007	249,811
		<u>579,970</u>	<u>594,407</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	19	506,722	580,618
Net current assets		<u>73,248</u>	<u>13,789</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>663,938</u>	<u>666,060</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	20	225,117	325,805
Net assets		<u>438,821</u>	<u>340,255</u>
Funds of the charity			
Unrestricted funds		438,821	340,255
Total charity funds	22	438,821	340,255

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 28 September 2020 and are signed on behalf of the board by:



Mr C J Henning
Trustee



Mr S McCaffrey
Trustee

Statement of Cash Flows

	2020	2019
	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net income	98,566	188,273
<i>Adjustments for:</i>		
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	1,687	1,543
Net (losses)/gains on investments	60,939	(3,009)
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	(23,563)	(21,629)
Other interest receivable and similar income	(858)	(751)
Accrued (income)/expenses	(94,428)	112,389
<i>Changes in:</i>		
Trade and other debtors	8,633	(47,538)
Trade and other creditors	(80,156)	(310,766)
Cash generated from operations	(29,180)	(81,488)
Interest received	858	751
Net cash used in operating activities	(28,322)	(80,737)
Cash flows from investing activities		
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	23,563	21,629
Purchase of tangible assets	(1,036)	(1,138)
Purchase of other investments	(203,789)	(78,183)
Proceeds from sale of other investments	203,780	89,034
Net cash from investing activities	22,518	31,342
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents	(5,804)	(49,395)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	249,811	299,206
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	244,007	249,811

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Charity is a public benefit entity and a private company limited by guarantee, registered in Northern Ireland and a registered charity in Northern Ireland. The address of the registered office is Innovation Centre, Large Park, Hillsborough, Co. Down, BT26 6DR, Northern Ireland.

2. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SROP (FRS 102)) and the Companies Act 2006.

3. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, as modified by the revaluation of certain financial assets and liabilities and investment properties measured at fair value through income or expenditure.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

Going concern

There are no material uncertainties about the charities ability to continue.

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In the application of the Charity's accounting policies, the Trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not

readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimates is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees to further any of the charity's purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular future project or commitment.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure declared by the donor or through the terms of an appeal, and fall into one of two sub-classes: restricted income funds or endowment funds.

Incoming resources

Incoming is recognised when the Charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably and it is probable that income will be received.

The levy rates charged to the producers are as follows:

Milk	0.02p per litre
Beef	40p per head
Sheep	5p per head

Levy rates have not changed since 2014.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the Charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the Charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known and the receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

Resources expended

All expenditure is accounted for on an accrual basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Grants payable to third parties are within charitable objectives. Where unconditional grants are offered, this is accrued as soon as the recipient is notified of the grant, as this gives rise to a reasonable expectation that the recipient will receive grants.

Expenditure on charitable activities includes costs undertaken to further the purposes of the charity.

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include office costs, management charges and governance costs which support the Council's activities. These costs have been allocated to charitable activities.

Tangible assets

Tangible assets are initially recorded at cost and subsequently stated at cost less any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses. Any tangible assets carried at revalued accounts are recorded at the fair value at the date of revaluation less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

An increase in the carrying amount of an asset as a result of revaluation, is recognised in other recognised gains and losses, unless it reverses a charge for impairment that has previously been recognised as expenditure within the statement of financial activities. A decrease in the carrying amount of an asset as a result of revaluation, is recognised in other recognised gains and losses, except to which it offsets any previous revaluation gain, in which case the loss is shown within other recognised gains and losses on the statement of financial activities.

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost or valuation or valuation of an asset, less its residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

Fixtures and fittings	- 20% straight line
IT Equipment	- 20% straight line

Investments

Fixed asset investments are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently stated at cost less any accumulated impairment losses. Changes in fair value are recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year. Transaction costs are expensed as incurred.

Investments in associates

Investments in associates accounted for in accordance with the cost model are recorded at

cost less any accumulated impairment losses.

Investments in associates accounted for in accordance with the fair value model are initially recorded at transaction price. At each reporting date, the investments are measured at fair value, with changes in fair value taken through income or expenditure. Where it is impracticable to measure fair value reliably without undue cost or effort, the cost model will be adopted.

Dividends and other distributions received from the investment are recognised as income without regard to whether the distributions are from accumulated profits of the joint venture arising before or after the date of acquisition.

Investments in joint ventures

A review for indicators of impairment is carried out at each reporting date, with the recoverable amount being estimated where such indicators exist. Where the carrying value exceeds the recoverable amount, the asset is impaired accordingly. Prior impairments are also reviewed for possible reversal at each reporting date.

For the purpose of impairment testing, when it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, an estimate is made of the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs.

The cash-generating unit is the smallest identifiable group of assets that includes the asset and generates cash inflows that largely independent of the cash inflows from other assets or groups of assets.

For impairment testing of goodwill, the goodwill acquired in business combination is, from the acquisition date, allocated to each of the cash-

generating units that are expected to benefit from the synergies of the combination, irrespective of whether other assets or liabilities of the charity have assigned to those units.

Financial instruments

A financial asset or financial liability is recognised only when the charity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at the amount receivable or payable including any related transaction costs.

Current assets and current liabilities are subsequently measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received and not discounted.

Debt instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost.

Where investments in shares are publicly traded or their fair value can otherwise be measured reliably, the investment is subsequently measured at fair value with changes in fair value recognised in income and expenditure. All other such investments are subsequently measured at cost less impairment.

Other financial instruments, including derivatives, are initially recognised at fair value, unless payment for an asset is deferred beyond normal business terms or financed at a rate of interest that is not a market rate, in which case the asset is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument.

Other financial instruments are subsequently measured at fair value, with any changes recognised

in the statement of financial activities, with the exception of hedging instruments in a designated hedging relationship.

Financial assets that are measured at cost or amortised cost are reviewed for objective evidence of impairment at the end of each reporting date. If there is objective evidence of impairment, an impairment loss is recognised under the appropriate heading in the statement of financial activities in which the initial gain was recognised.

For all equity instruments regardless of significance, and other financial assets that are individually significant, these are assessed individually for impairment. Other financial assets are either assessed individually or grouped on the basis of similar credit risk characteristics.

Any reversals of impairment are recognised immediately, to the extent that the reversal does not result in a carrying amount of the financial asset that exceeds what the carrying amount would have been had the impairment not previously been recognised.

Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that the prepayment will lead to a reduction in future payments or a cash refund.

When contributions are not expected to be settled wholly within 12 months of the end of the reporting date in which the employees render the related service, the liability is measured on a discounted present value basis. The unwinding of the discount is recognised as an expense in the period in which it arises.

Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the Charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

4. LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

The company, being a company limited by guarantee, does not have share capital. The liability of members of the company is limited to £1 per member.

5. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2019 £
Donations				
Donations and gifts	458,835	458,835	501,852	501,852
Grants				
Grants receivable	177,582	177,582	123,327	123,327
	636,417	636,417	625,179	625,179
			2020	2019
			£	£
Donations and Gifts			290,373	316,180
Milk Levy			120,238	120,260
Beef Levy			20,581	19,134
Sheep - Contribution from Livestock and Meat Commission			-	15,000
AHWNI			27,643	31,278
			458,835	501,852
Grants for Core Activities				
DAERA Research Challenge Fund			177,582	47,596
EU Horizon 2020				75,731
			177,582	123,327

AgriSearch collects funds for AHWNI which are then paid across to AHWNI. These funds have been included with income and expenditure in the financial statements.

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2019 £
Income from other investments	23,563	23,563	21,629	21,629
Other interest receivable	858	858	751	751
	24,421	24,421	22,380	22,380

7. Expenditure on charitable activities by fund type

	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2019 £
Research and development in the agricultural industry	423,139	423,139	379,487	379,487
Support costs	78,194	78,194	82,808	82,808
	501,333	501,333	462,295	462,295

	2020 £	2019 £
Staff costs	71,303	67,936
Dissemination costs	26,259	38,828
AHWNI funding	39,728	37,900
	137,290	144,644
Grant funding activities	285,849	234,823
Share of support costs	69,393	68,507
Share of governance costs	8,801	14,301
Unrestricted fund	501,333	462,295

8. Reconciliation of project commitments

	2020 £	2019 £
Grants to institutions		
Opening commitments	749,445	1,074,496
Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute	302,582	370,084
Queen's University Belfast	10,000	
(Decreased)/Increased project in year	226,780	(231,424)
Paid during the year	(657,431)	(463,711)
	631,376	749,711

9. Expenditure on charitable activities by activity type

	Activities under-taken directly	Support costs	Total Funds 2020	Total Funds 2019
	£	£	£	£
Research and development in the agricultural industry	423,139	69,393	492,532	447,994
Governance costs	-	8,801	8,801	14,301
	423,139	78,194	501,333	462,295

10. Analysis of support costs

	Analysis of support costs activity 1	Total 2020	Total 2019
	£	£	£
Staff costs	27,542	27,542	27,613
Premises	6,316	6,316	7,683
Communications and IT	2,600	2,600	2,432
General office	12,177	12,177	5,637
Finance costs	8,424	8,424	12,822
Governance costs	8,801	8,801	14,301
Support costs - other motor/travel costs	272	272	405
Support costs - depreciation	1,687	1,687	1,543
Support costs - other costs	5,736	5,736	3,490
Support costs - VAT	4,639	4,639	6,882
	78,194	78,194	82,808

11. Net (losses)/gains on investments

	Unrestricted Funds	Total Funds 2020	Unrestricted Funds	Total Funds 2019
	£	£	£	£
Gains/(losses) on other investment assets	(60,939)	(60,939)	3,009	3,009

12. Net income

Net income is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2020	2019
	£	£
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	1,687	1,543

13. Auditors remuneration

	2020	2019
	£	£
Fees payable for the audit of the financial statements	3,000	3,500

14. Staff costs

The total staff costs and employee benefits for the reporting period are analysed as follows

	2020	2019
	£	£
Wages and salaries	91,259	89,615
Social security costs	5,496	4,686
Employer contributions to pension plans	2,090	1,248
	<u>98,845</u>	<u>95,549</u>

The average head count of employees during the year was 4 (2019: 4). The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year is analysed as follows

	2020	2019
	No.	No.
Field officer	-	1
General manager	1	1
Project officer	2	1
Finance office	1	1
	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>

No employee received employee benefits of more than £60,000 during the year (2019: Nil).

15. Trustees remuneration and expenses

None of the Trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration during the year (2019: £Nil). Trustees were reimbursed expenditure totalling £893 (2019: £1,484) and in addition, one trustee received £700 for taking part in GrassCheck project.

16. Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and fittings £	IT equipment £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2019	1,769	6,115	7,884
Additions	906	130	1,036
At 31 March 2020	2,675	6,245	8,920
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2019	673	3,069	3,742
Charge for the year	458	1,229	1,687
At 31 March 2020	1,131	4,298	5,429
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2020	1,544	1,947	3,491
At 31 March 2019	1,096	3,046	4,142

17. Investments

	Other Investments
	£
Cost or valuation	
At 1 April 2019	648,129
Additions	203,789
Disposals	203,780
Fair value movements	(60,939)
At 31 March 2020	587,199
impairment	
At 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020	-
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2020	587,199
At 31 March 2019	648,129

All investments shown above are held at valuation.

18. Debtors

	2020	2019
	£	£
Trade debtors	188,897	165,891
Prepayments and accrued income	147,066	151,352
Other debtors	-	27,353
	<u>335,963</u>	<u>344,596</u>

19. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2020	2019
	£	£
Trade creditors	56,059	25,173
Accruals and deferred income	24,599	119,027
Social security and other taxes	1,880	2,169
Other creditors	424,071	432,752
Other creditors	113	1,497
	<u>506,722</u>	<u>580,618</u>

20. Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	2020	2019
	£	£
Other creditors	225,117	325,805

21. Pensions and other post retirement benefits

Defined contribution plans

The amount recognised in income or expenditure as an expense in relation to defined contribution plans was £2,090 (2019: £1,248).

22. Analysis of charitable funds

Unrestricted funds

	At 1 April 2019	Income	Expenditure	Gains and losses	At 31 March 2020
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	340,255	660,838	(501,333)	(60,939)	438,821

	At 1 April 2018	Income	Expenditure	Gains and losses	At 31 March 2019
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	151,982	647,559	(462,295)	3,009	340,255

23. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds	Total Funds 2020
	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	3,491	3,491
Investments	587,199	587,199
Current assets	579,970	579,970
Creditors less than 1 year	(506,722)	(506,722)
Creditors greater than 1 year	(225,117)	(225,117)
Net assets	438,821	438,821

	Unrestricted Funds	Total Funds 2019
	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	4,142	4,142
Investments	648,129	648,129
Current assets	594,407	594,407
Creditors less than 1 year	(580,618)	(580,618)
Creditors greater than 1 year	(325,805)	(325,805)
Net assets	340,255	340,255

24. Financial instruments

The carrying amount for each category of financial instrument is as follows:

	2020	2019
	£	£
Financial assets that are debt instruments measured at amortised cost		
Financial assets that are debt instruments measured at amortised cost	188,897	193,244
Financial assets that are equity instruments measured at cost less impairment		
Financial assets that are equity instruments measured at cost less impairment	587,199	648,130
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost		
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	729,959	904,255

25. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 April 2019	Cash flows	At 31 March 2020
	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	249,811	(5,804)	244,007

26. Related parties

During the year there were members of the AgriSearch advisory committees and Board of Trustees who were involved as farmer co-researchers in projects which AgriSearch co-funded. The advisory committees are in place to review funding and expenditure proposals.

A total of £6,042 (2019: £8,238) was paid out to four members of the Beef Advisory Committee, four members of the Dairy Advisory Committee and two members of the Sheep Advisory Committee.

Two members of the Sheep advisory committee and one member of the Beef advisory committee sit on the board of AHWNI. AgriSearch collected levies of £39,728 (2019: £37,900) on behalf of AHWNI and made payments of £39,728 (£37,900) to AHWNI during the year. The balance owing to AHWNI at the year end was £7,954 (2019: £5,304).

John Henning, Chairman of AgriSearch is also a director of Countryside Services Ltd and CIELivestock Limited, who provide services to the charity within the terms of their charitable activities. Countryside Services Ltd was paid a total of £6,384 (2019: £11,078) and CIELivestock Limited was paid a total of £1,267 (2019: £nil).

John Henning and Jason Rankin are also directors of Royal Ulster Agricultural Society (RUAS).



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