



ULSTER GRASSLAND SOCIETY

Background

The Ulster Grassland Society (UGS) was founded in 1959. It brought together farmers, advisory officers, lecturers, research workers, and representatives from across the agricultural commercial sector with an interest in grassland production and utilisation.

Objectives

The main objective of the UGS is to encourage the adoption into farming practices of advantages resulting from grassland research, experimental work and practical experience. It provides opportunities for those interested in, and concerned with, grassland husbandry to meet and exchange information, ideas and experiences relating to all aspects of the management, production and utilisation of grass.

British Grassland Society

The Ulster grassland Society is affiliated to the British Grassland Society (BGS) and members are able to participate in BGS activities. Members also receive complementary copies of the BGS quarterly publication 'Grass Farmer'.

Activities

Typically, the UGS holds three major events each year. The '**Annual Conference**' is held in early February with eminent national and international speakers. It provides the opportunity of keeping up to date with changes in the industry with an eye to practical implications and provides a forum for research workers to review and discuss their current work. The '**Summer Meeting**' usually consists of visits to farms, commercial units or research stations and takes place in early May. The '**Autumn Meeting**' may be either a farm walk or mini-conference and usually takes place in October.

Grassland Farmer Competition

There is an annual competition open to all farmer members of the UGS and generously sponsored by the Northern Bank. The competition has grazing management, silage utilisation, and environmental practice rounds. The entrant with the best overall marks also has the opportunity to go forward to the British Grassland Society's National Grassland Management Competition.

Student Membership Scheme

The UGS has a student membership scheme, which confers the benefits of membership free to full-time students taking agricultural courses at College or University for the duration of their studies.

The Bursary Programme

The Ulster Grassland Society has a long association with CAFRE and Matt Boyd, one of the founding members of the UGS, was the Principal of Greenmount. The Ulster Grassland Society recognises the importance of higher education for new entrants into the agricultural industry and is keen to offer a bursary to support those wishing to seek a career in the agricultural industry.

Report Title for the Ulster Grassland Society Bursary Award

Food Crops versus Energy Crops – The Land Use Dilemma.