

**-SQA- SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY**

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**NATIONAL CERTIFICATE MODULE DESCRIPTOR**

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**-Module Number- 1180640 -Session-1990-91**  
**-Superclass- SH**

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**-Title- SUCKLER COW ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT**

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**-DESCRIPTION-**

Purpose This module is designed to enable the student to acquire the skills and knowledge needed to manage a suckler cow unit.

It is aimed at those who will have a supervisory role in an enterprise within the land based sector.

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Preferred Entry Level 1180540 Suckled Calf Production.  
1180800 Livestock Breed Improvement.  
1180810 Livestock Nutrition Management.

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Outcomes The student should:

1. plan a stock buying and selling programme for a suckler cow enterprise;
2. plan a feeding and housing system for a suckler enterprise;
3. plan a herd health programme for a suckler enterprise;
4. evaluate management in the light of calculated financial and physical herd efficiency factors.

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Assessment Procedures Acceptable performance in the module will be the satisfactory achievement of all the Performance Criteria specified for each Outcome.

The following abbreviations are used below:

PC Performance Criteria  
IA Instrument of Assessment

**Note:** The Outcomes and PCs are mandatory and cannot be altered. The IA may be altered by arrangement with SQA. (Where a range of performance is indicated, this should be regarded as an extension of the PCs and is therefore mandatory.)

**OUTCOME 1                      PLAN A STOCK BUYING AND SELLING PROGRAMME FOR A SUCKLER COW ENTERPRISE**

- PCs
- (a) The selection of a breeding and replacement policy is appropriate for the given farm circumstances.
  - (b) The selection of weaned calves for sale is in line with current market requirements.

IA    Assignment

The student will be set an assignment which tests the application of knowledge and skills required to plan a stock buying and selling programme for a suckler cow enterprise.

The assignment will centre on a specific farm situation and will cover the following areas:

- (i)        selection of breeding and replacement policy;
- (ii)       selection of weaned calves for sale.

Satisfactory achievement of the Outcome will be based on all the Performance Criteria being met.

**OUTCOME 2                      PLAN A FEEDING AND HOUSING SYSTEM FOR A SUCKLER ENTERPRISE**

- PCs
- (a) The selection of the housing system and handling facilities is appropriate for the given circumstances.
  - (b) The selection of the feeding system and feeding routine is appropriate for the given circumstances and animal.
  - (c) The formulation of rations is accurate and suitable for suckler cattle.

IA    Assignment

The student will be set an assignment which tests the application of knowledge and skills required to plan a feeding and housing system for a suckler enterprise.

The assignment will centre on a specific farm situation and will cover the following areas:

- (i) selection of housing system and handling facilities;
- (ii) selection of feeding system and feeding routine;
- (iii) formulation of rations for 2 classes of suckler cattle.

Satisfactory achievement of the Outcome will be based on all the Performance Criteria being met.

### **OUTCOME 3 PLAN A HERD HEALTH PROGRAMME FOR A SUCKLER ENTERPRISE**

- PCs
- (a) The disease prevention programme devised is appropriate for the given farm circumstances.
  - (b) The disease control programme devised is appropriate for the given farm circumstances.

#### **IA Assignment**

The student will be set an assignment which tests the application of knowledge and skills required to plan a herd health programme.

The assignment will centre on a specific farm situation and will cover the following areas:

- (i) devising a disease prevention programme;
- (ii) devising a disease control programme.

Satisfactory achievement of the Outcome will be based on Performance Criteria being met.

### **OUTCOME 4 EVALUATE MANAGEMENT IN THE LIGHT OF CALCULATED FINANCIAL AND PHYSICAL HERD EFFICIENCY FACTORS**

- PCs
- (a) The calculation of efficiency factors is accurate.
  - (b) The comparison of efficiency factors is valid in terms of the standards chosen.
  - (c) The conclusions drawn and recommendations made are comprehensive, valid and clear.

#### **IA Assignment**

The student will be set an assignment which tests the application of knowledge and skills required to modify management of a suckler herd in the light of calculated financial and physical herd efficiency factors.

The assignment will centre on a given set of actual or prepared farm data and will cover the following areas:

- (i) calculation of efficiency factors;
- (ii) comparison of efficiency factors with standards.
- (iii) appropriate conclusions and recommendations are made.

Satisfactory achievement of the Outcome will be based on all the Performance Criteria being met.

**The following sections of the descriptor are offered as guidance.  
They are not mandatory.**

### CONTENT/CONTEXT

Safety regulations and safe working practices and procedures should be adhered to at all times.

Corresponding to Outcomes 1-4:

1. Breeding Policy - choice of breed or cross - suitability to hill, upland or lowland situations. Selection of herd size, stocking rate, calving date.  
  
Fertility aspects - bull: cow ratio, calving index, compact calving, condition score. AI or natural service. Breed/herd improvement.  
  
Herd replacement systems. Replacement rate. Source of replacements. Purchased as cows, in calf heifers, bulling heifers, calves or home bred. Age at first calving.  
  
Culling policy. Factors affecting culling rate. Disposal of cull cows.  
  
Marketing aspects. Choice of sale date and venue. Importance of age and weight at sale time. Grouping for sale in terms of sex, breed, weight and age. Preparation of calves before sale to present calves in optimum condition.
2. Housing requirements for all classes of stock - cows, calves and bulls. Out-wintering aspects - shelter. Dung and effluent disposal. Handling facilities. Range of feeding and grazing systems for all classes of stock. Calculation of rations for different situations e.g. dry cow in wintered or small cow out wintered.
3. The devising of a health programme to prevent and control diseases of suckled calves and cows. The activities of the stockman and the services of the veterinary surgeon should be covered in some detail.
4. Physical and financial herd efficiency factors should be calculated and compared with national recorded figures to identify strengths and weaknesses in the management system. Suggest management changes to rectify any areas of weakness.

**SUGGESTED LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES**

A programme combining lectures, visits, projects, demonstrations and films to show the pros and cons of the various systems and their implications in a variety of situations. Role-playing exercises involving decision making related to a specific situation. Ideally involvement with the running of a unit to record performance and to compile and compare results with standards.

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