

The Scottish Government's New Entrants to Farming Programme



Andrew and Lorna Prentice

Andrew and Lorna Prentice took on a new challenge in September 2013 when they moved from a 90 acre unsecure tenancy at Floors Farm, Stonehaven to a 240 acre tenancy on the picturesque Isle of Iona. Andrew, Lorna and their children John and Kelsie have an initial 5 year tenancy with the National Trust of Scotland for Maol & St Columba Farm. The land is made up of 70 acres of improved grassland and 170 acres of rough grazing. The family currently run 200 head of pure Scottish Blackface females, in addition to this Andrew poses as the island mechanic and helps crofters with contracting work, while Lorna works in the local hotel.

The family ran Blackface ewes on their tenancy at Stonehaven but felt they needed more land to warrant farming and something with more security for their family. They applied for numerous tenancies, going through the tendering process and reaching numerous interviews but kept coming to one main stumbling block, capital. The family were determined and kept trying, with persistence paying off when they were given the opportunity to farm Maol and St Columba Farm.

What has been the biggest challenge you have faced as a new entrant?

The biggest challenge to date has been availability of capital. Limited capital is a huge weakness when competing for tenancies against established farmers.

Case Studies

Learn from the experiences of other new entrants in a series of case studies.

Guidance notes are also available which are tailored specifically to assist new entrants to farming, with their business needs.

Find further information, including links to other case studies and the guidance notes, at www.sruc.ac.uk/newentrants

This programme is funded by the Scottish Government as part of it's New Entrants to Farming Advisory Activity.



What hurdles have you had to overcome?

The main hurdle for the family has been the lack of opportunity to gain a secure tenancy. Luckily they were open to relocating to fulfil their goal.

What financial & advisory assistance have you received?

Andrew and Lorna completed the business plan and budgets themselves for the tenancy, this was to ensure they understood all of the figures in preparation for any questions at the interview. A consultant looked over these figures for accuracy prior to the business plan being submitted.

Prior to moving to the Isle of Iona, Andrew and Lorna attended the New Entrants to Farming workshops.

The couple have not as yet received any single farm payment or LFA payments.

What is your main motivation to farm?

To breed the best animal they can and be successful in the sales and show rings. To build a rural family life for the children.

“Persistence Pays”

Andrew and Lorna Prentice



What advice would you give to someone thinking of entering the industry?

To any other new entrant, the couple's advice is to save money as soon as you can to build on capital. If you are offered seasonal temporary grazing take it, as it gives you a start to build your enterprises and finally persistence pays off!

What are your future ambitions?

To increase the flock and possibly introduce some cattle. The main driver for Andrew is to achieve success at the Highland Show with his Blackfaces, ultimately a top three placing and to top the local mart with their breeding females.

Looking for some more information?

There is a network of new entrants across the country who are in various stages of developing their businesses and achieving their goals. You can contact this network through various streams including:

- Regional workshops
- Facebook (www.facebook.com/NewEntrants)
- Website (www.sruc.ac.uk/newentrants)

For more details contact

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