



October 2011

PRESS RELEASE

ASDA'S SUGAR-RICH GRASS TO CONFRONT COW CARBON CONUNDRUM

- **Asda is the first supermarket to introduce High Sugar Grass to its beef, lamb and dairy farmers.**
- **Asda to discount high sugar grass to its 13,500 farmers to reduce cow carbon footprint**
- **Move equal to taking around 78,000 cars off the road**
- **High Sugar Grass will reduce bought-in farmer feed costs and increase animal yields.**

Asda today announced that it is the first retailer to introduce a revolutionary new grass for its beef, lamb and dairy herds. The supermarket aims to reduce the CO₂ from its cows and sheep, and cut emissions by 186,000 tonnes – the equivalent of 78,000 cars off the road*. Laboratory tests have shown this new High Sugar Grass can cut methane emissions by 20 per cent per animal**.

The agricultural sector accounts for over 40 per cent of the nation's methane emissions – mostly through oral emissions.

Asda has teamed up with British Seed Houses to introduce Aber[®] High Sugar Grass (Aber HSG) and Aber clovers to its 13,500 farmers across the UK. Bred and developed in Britain, Aber HSG significantly reduces methane emissions and also minimises bought-in feed costs - one of the biggest farmer financial outlays - improves production efficiencies and animal yields.

In partnership with British Seed Houses, Asda has been trialling the new grass at its dairy, beef and lamb demonstration farms to assess the performance of Aber HSG grasses in a variety of systems. It is also offering its BeefLink, LambLink and DairyLink farmers one free acre bag of high sugar grass seed for every ten acres purchased which equates to a saving of £55-60 per ten acres, ensuring significant cost savings.

Pearce Hughes, Asda's agricultural manager said: "Our tests show high sugar grass increases yields, reduces bought-in feed costs and saves carbon emissions, making it the perfect formula for the British farming. Our aim is to ensure long-term financial sustainability for our farmers as well as making sure we're doing our bit for the environment, so this is a natural grass choice for us.

By introducing Aber HSG to our extensive British farming network we will increase profitability by over £10m in the first year alone - money in the pockets of farmers***. This programme will also contribute to Walmart's global goal of removing 20 million tonnes of greenhouse gases from the supply chain."

Savings on feed costs come from having higher quality grass that fattens animals alone without having to buy high energy cereals as required with average grasses. Also, high quality silage (conserved pickled grass fed during the winter) is much higher in quality than average silage so again less bought in feed required to balance the ration.

Speaking on behalf of British Seed Houses agricultural director Paul Billings said the potential of Aber HSG grasses to boost production on BeefLink, LambLink and DairyLink farms should not be underestimated.

"Trials have shown that dairy herds grazing Aber HSG grasses can produce up to six pc more milk per cow over the grazing season, with a three per cent improvement in diet digestibility. Beef farm trials have seen daily dry matter intakes increased by a quarter, with 18-35 per cent higher daily liveweight gains and cattle reaching slaughter-weight more quickly.

"We're delighted to be working with Asda on this new initiative and I'm confident it will lead to a long lasting legacy of improved production efficiency in the livestock sector," said Mr Billings.

Grass is the mainstay of the British dairy, beef and lamb production and is the most natural feed for animals, but cattle and sheep are actually poor convertors of grass protein into milk and meat. When grazing ordinary grass, livestock use only 20pc of protein from the herbage for production – most of the rest is wasted in faeces and urine. This is not only financially costly, but also detrimental to the environment.

Research (reference to IBERS has been removed here) has shown that Aber HSG varieties have consistently higher levels of sugars than standard varieties throughout the grazing season. Several

trials involving dairy and beef cattle, as well as sheep, have demonstrated significant performance benefits from feeding Aber HSG.

Some trials on Aber High Sugar Grass have produced the following statistics:

Dairy herds:

- Six per cent more milk per cow over grazing season
- Dry matter intakes up per 2kg/head per day
- Three per cent improvement in diet digestibility
- 24 per cent less feed nitrogen lost in urine

Beef production

- Dry matter intakes increased by around 25 per cent
- Higher forage intakes
- 20 per cent higher daily live-weight gains
- Slaughter-weights reached more quickly

Lamb production

- Higher forage intakes
- 20 per cent higher live-weight gains
- 20 per cent higher carrying capacity

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*Using high sugar grass and assuming 20 per cent reduction for beef and sheep and all land is reseeded.

* Tests in lamb trials found a 20 per cent reduction on methane emissions.

**This is based on farms reseeding or renewing approximately 10% of their productive grassland per annum with Aber HSGs and the effect that will have on milk yields and live weight gain. This figure can be expected to rise to over £50m per annum after 5 years as a greater proportion of productive land utilised is sown with Aber HSGs

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