

FARM WALK AT PENLANOLE ON WEDNESDAY, 31ST JULY 2002

Wildlife Conservation Issues

Intensive farming- high inputs of fertilisers, pesticides and animal feeds

Extensive farming

Organic farming

Mixed farming- oats or root crops for winter feeding rather than animal feeds

Biodiversity

Sustainability

Maximising production to within the limits which can be sustained by the environment i.e. without damaging the environment. This is sustainable farming which delivers and maintains biodiversity, supports the local economy and the local community.

Need to establish systems of land management that exploit natural resources within locally sustainable limits.

Traditional farming practices (organic and extensive) have achieved this sustainable production in the past (over 4000 years) and have created social, economic and biodiversity and landscape benefits.

BSE, the Foot and Mouth Disease crisis are symptoms of an agricultural system which is not in balance with the environment. A system which is exceeding the carrying capacity of the environment.

To prevent further damage to the environment, to reduce risks to food safety and human welfare, agricultural policies need to shift from intensive production of crops and livestock, to more sustainable forms of land management which incorporate conservation of biodiversity and landscape.

Agricultural subsidies need to change from those supporting maximum production of farm products to ones supporting agri-environment schemes.

There is a desperate need to reform CAP policies in line with this thinking.

Shift from intensive to extensive farming will integrate production and conservation of wildlife, restore local cultures, economies, biodiversity and landscape.