

## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT

### PRESS RELEASE

#### **Livestock owner receives assistance from the Department of Environment for the establishment of a semi-intensive livestock production unit.**

Mr Anderson Kirnon has received resources and access to expertise to enable him to construct a model farm at Gerald's, which would increase the productivity of his current livestock unit and promote semi-intensive livestock farming practices. The Montserrat Departments of Environment and Agriculture are collaborating with Mr Kirnon to establish the model farm.

The farm was made possible through a grant from the UK Overseas Territories Environment Programme under a project entitled: *Conserving the Centre Hills in Montserrat through the effective control of feral livestock populations*. The Project is designed to: (i) build local capacity to effectively manage feral and loose livestock populations, (ii) reduce these populations to a level where they do not significantly impact the biodiversity of the Centre Hills and (iii) ensure that domesticated livestock do not contribute to the feral animal population.



Early stages of construction of Mr Kirnon's model farm © Andy Kirnon

Construction is progressing on a pen that will be compartmentalized into 6 areas. There will be 3 small isolation or lambing areas, 2 medium sized weaning or communal areas and 1 large holding area. The holding capacity of the pen will be approximately 20 sheep. Adjacent to the pen is a fenced paddock which will provide fodder and exercise for the animals.

Promotion of this semi-intensive farming enterprise will take place by way of demonstration sessions for other farmers and interested persons. It is hoped that these demonstrations would lead others to adopt the technology, thereby resulting in increased production and improved quality of meat, while reducing the need for culling feral and loose livestock.



Early stages of construction of Mr Kirnon's model farm © Andy Kirnon

Chief Veterinary Officer, Dr Selvyn Maloney explains that this system is extremely advantageous for keeping good quality livestock. He states that it gives the farmer the opportunity to inspect his livestock on a daily basis, allowing him to quickly pick up on any anomalies in herd health, administer treatment in a timely manner, keep better records and devise an effective breeding system.

Livestock owner, Mr Anderson Kirnon stated that the project will enable him to improve the way his animals are being kept, as well as improve the breed. He would now be able to convert precious land space normally used for rough grazing into fodder banks. Mr Kirnon also expressed his appreciation to the Departments of Environment and Agriculture for giving him the opportunity to develop the model farm.

Meanwhile, Director of Environment, Mr Gerard Gray affirmed that the system improves the management and control of livestock, utilizes less land than traditional practices and reduces the likelihood of animals roaming. It also decreases the negative impact on the environment, particularly biodiversity of national and global importance and improves road safety, as the animals will no longer be on the streets.

Gerard A L Gray  
**Department of Environment**

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