

Dear Members,

You may recall a round-robin email sent out by Chris regarding the production of 'micro greens'. The company that is doing the research is called BIC Innovations, based in Bristol (I believe they have a 'Welsh arm'), working on behalf of Cardiff Capital Region's (CCR) Sustainable Production & Supply of Food Challenge. CCR is looking to develop a sustainable, local and flexible source of fresh vegetables which sources services and materials within Wales.

The reason they contacted the Guild is to tap into our considerable collective knowledge of the fibres we work with (principally wool) - sourcing organic/sustainable fleece and Welsh processors, spinners and weavers.

They are also interested in our involvement in trialling a variety of yarns, weave structures and size, which is where we can offer a practical input. It looks like some research has already been done, if only in a fairly limited way, so this might be helpful.

The growing system is hydroponics, so essentially the plants will be grown on a woven mat with the roots growing through the mat into a tank full of plant nutrients - the technique is well-established but this project is designed for specifically Welsh needs. The wool content, weave structure and local manufacturers/producers is the focus of research at this stage.

I think initially we will be tapped up for information before any practical trials take place - those of you who are experienced in the production of yarn from fleece and also those who send fleece away to be processed are probably the most valuable at this stage. Any information regarding fleece types, their qualities and availability, Welsh processors, spinners and weavers is needed. I know that they have already made contact with Curlew Weavers but are very interested in a range of companies.

Once (and if) it gets to a point where our labour is required, I have suggested that the organisation makes a contribution to Guild funds - they are being paid for this research and I see no reason why we should not benefit as well.

Ultimately this may well be good for our craft - being involved in a project to promote and benefit Welsh growers will reflect well on us! It will of course be good for Welsh farmers and wool processors

I have an email with a bit more information in it, so if you're interested in more details, then I can send you a copy.

My daughter is currently studying for a MSc in Ecology and Sustainability so is watching this with a keen interest!

I think it will be easier and more structured if I am used as the contact point, so feel free to contact me on WhatsApp or you can send me an email at hugh.malleson@gmail.com

No information is trivial or unimportant, so don't feel that you can't contribute to this if you're interested - it will be a steep learning curve for me as well!!!

Thank you
Hugh