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Upland Agriculture and the Environment

Lois Mansfield

Agricultural activity in uplands is fundamentally determined by the character of the physical environment, resulting in a low input-low output system and highly valued biodiverse habitats. Over the last 50 years the quality of many of these has unfortunately deteriorated, often blamed on poor agricultural management. *Upland Agriculture & the Environment* demonstrates that far from laying this fully at farming's doorstep, deteriorating habitats and related environmental issues can be traced back to inappropriate political decisions based on poor understanding of socio-economic processes operating on farms and in their related communities. Consequently, upland farm businesses have suffered from low incomes and related succession problems, contracting the sector and destabilising their communities, symptoms of which have been environmental under-management and rural depopulation.

The fortunes of upland agriculture are, however, beginning to re-invigorate. The latest environmental agendas of ecosystem service delivery, food security concerns and carbon management needs are providing new opportunities to diversify income streams. From social and economic pariah to social and environmental necessity, upland agriculture is needed more than ever.

Through a comprehensive understanding of the whole picture, this book aims to demonstrate to readers the critical continuation of upland agriculture in order to address the new environmental agendas.

Contents

Upland agricultural farming system; Defining the extent of uplands; Historical evolution of the upland farming landscape; The physical environment; A High Nature Value landscape; Economics of upland agriculture; Social dimension of upland agriculture; Politics and upland agriculture; A Future for upland agriculture; References.

The book contains over 360 pages, 100 tables, 60 figures and 40 boxes, and is supported by The NINEVEH Charitable Trust.

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About the Author

Dr Lois Mansfield is a Principal Lecturer at the Newton Rigg campus of the University of Cumbria, where she has lectured in agricultural geography and related upland topics for 16 years.



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