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DUMFRIES' KYLE FARM PARTNERSHIP EYES HERD EXPANSION WITH HSBC SUPPORT

A Dumfries dairy farmer has secured a £350,000 funding package from HSBC to help upgrade farm facilities in anticipation of a significant increase in herd size and production.

The Kyle Farm Partnership is in the process of upgrading 100 hectares of land at Linns Farm, Collin, bringing the total number of usable hectares to 360. The farm currently has a herd of 730 Friesian cross Jersey cows, but plans to grow that to 1,000 cows over the next few years following the completion of the work, which includes improving drainage, re-fencing, re-seeding and improving the fertility of the land.

The business has also improved its rotary milking parlour, where it currently produces 2.9 million litres of milk a year, with plans to place to take that to four million.

The Partnership secured the funding from HSBC's Scottish Agriculture team in a deal managed by Neil Wilson, HSBC Scotland Regional Agricultural Manager. The funding marks the start of a new relationship between the Kyle Farm Partnership and HSBC, which has seen HSBC restructure existing debt to help improve working capital at the business and help lay the foundations for future business expansion.

The Kyle Farm Partnership is run by husband and wife Michael and Lorrie Kyle, who purchased the farm in 2006 after selling their previous farming business in Northern Ireland. Michael Kyle operates his farm on New Zealand farming practices, and his cattle are grazed on grass from late February to November.

Michael Kyle said: "We have made a significant investment in the farm since acquiring it eight years ago and this latest programme will increase our level of

effective usable land by nearly half, enabling us to grow our herd and produce more milk. Also our newly acquired Farm Manager, Nik Jowsey is now an integral part of this expansion. Neil Wilson and his team from HSBC have been very keen to help us; Neil is from a farming background so understands the pressures we operate under.”

Neil Wilson, HSBC Scotland Regional Agricultural Manager, added: “Michael and Lorrie Kyle are a great example of the farmers we are working with across Scotland at the moment; investing in their businesses to achieve growth and efficiency. HSBC has a strong desire to support farmers across Scotland and the wider UK, last year we grew our lending to the UK farming sector by 20% and we want to achieve further growth in 2014.”

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