

A Farmers View Of... The Wet Winter

I will try not to whinge too much about the appalling weather we have had this winter when there are so many farmers and householders whose houses and land have been underwater for weeks. They

are so much worse off than we are as they are facing a disaster with houses and crops ruined and many animals having to be moved away or sold.

New Springs Bubbling Up

In our case here in the Wychwoods, the fields are saturated but not flooded so the crops will survive. However vital nutrients will have been leached out and it is difficult to know when we will be able to get machinery onto the fields to carry out operations. The ideal timings for these spraying and fertilizer operations have already been compromised but it remains to be seen by how much. I have never known the water table so high with new springs appearing in places we have never seen them before. The spring that supplies our farm water is normally eight to ten feet below ground level but at the moment



The Evenlode in January

it is barely two feet below. There is evidence of this from the water pouring out of the banks all along the roads at Upper Milton.

Spreading the pig slurry is another headache as all

the extra dirty rainwater has filled our slurry stores to capacity. We are lucky that we do have an umbilical pumping system which means that the slurry can be pumped direct from the store to the field and spread without the need for a tractor and tanker to spread it. Driving on the fields at all would leave enormous ruts and cause compaction.

Sadly, the only people who think they have the right to drive on our fields during this wet time are the illegal hare-courers who chase the wildlife and make a dreadful mess with their 4 x 4s. However this is something we have to live with all the time in wet or dry weather. Nature being what it is, maybe by the time you read this we will be complaining of the heat and a drought!

Richard S Hartley

Gateway Generosity

We have had another successful year selling our surplus allotment produce on the table by the gate. A total of £910 was sent to Lawrence Home Nursing. This is in spite of a few wobbles in August when produce went missing without payment and foreign coins seemed to be legal tender! For those who gave generously and paid in coins/notes of the realm many, many thanks.

David and Joanna van de Poll