



# MEADOWSWEET MATTERS

## News from the farmyard

**A**t last – Spring has arrived! And hasn't it taken a long time to come, this year?

At the beginning of April, it still felt like Winter and there was very little grass growth, so the cattle have stayed inside a little longer than normal. We eventually turned them out on 18th April and it was wonderful to see them literally kicking their heels and jumping for joy at being outside after a long hard Winter. One lot have been turned out into a field just seeded with grass last Autumn. This field

hasn't had livestock in it for over 30 years but we felt it needed a rest from arable cropping. There was no water in the field, so we had to dig a trench and pipe water 400 meters from the farm to supply a new drinking trough. The field had to be fenced as well, so it has been quite a major undertaking. Once the cattle have taken the top off the grass, they will be moved to their usual quarters at the bottom of the village and we'll make hay from the grass in June or July.

## WELCOME TO BERTHA.

Most mothers get flowers or chocolates for Mothers Day – not me – I got a pig! Bertha arrived on Mothering Sunday, quite appropriately as she soon gave birth to 9 piglets.

She is a pure bred pedigree Berkshire; a native breed known for it's excellent mothering qualities. Not knowing much about pigs we invested in a book about them which has been quite helpful, telling us that Berkshires can be "very naughty". There's nothing like learning by experience though, and we're getting plenty of that. Bertha made a giant nest a day before the piglets arrived and when we checked on her late at night she was snoring soundly. At 6 O'Clock the next morning we were greeted with a row of 9 beautiful piglets all feeding happily. It has been amazing watching Bertha with her piglets. She is

very protective of them and "talks" to them constantly with a series of grunts which seem to have different meanings: "Come to me", "It's feeding time", "go away" and "let me have a rest" are the ones we've managed to translate so far. She also talks to us and is very glad to see us at feeding time! So leading on from this – the new addition to the Farm Shop is Meadowsweet Pork! Bertha's last litter are available in the shop now if you'd like to try some. And this lot will be ready in the late Summer. If you'd like some for the freezer, half pigs are available, fully butchered at £100. Let us know, and we'll add you to the waiting list.

### A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY...

Our next lot of beef will be available at the BEGINNING OF JUNE.

Let us know if you would like to pre-order a £55 or £110 box. Individual cuts can be ordered in advance too, or come to the shop at the beginning of June and choose for yourself. In the meantime, there are some frozen joints available. Just pop into the shop and choose from the freezers



Spotted over Meadowsweet Farm Shop, recently....

A red kite. At last – they've arrived. They have been making their way up the M40 from the Chilterns for some time but the first one we spotted appeared in Horley at the beginning of April. It may just have been making a rekkie, but it would be great if they nested here. Watch this space – we'll keep you posted.



# HAPPY BIRTHDAY MEADOWSWEET FARM SHOP!



The Farm Shop celebrates its first Birthday in May so do come along to celebrate with us. Each Saturday in May will see different tastings on offer. Who knows, you might even get treated to a slice of birthday cake. Thanks to everyone who uses the farm shop. It has been a busy 12 months and a steep learning curve, but we have gradually extended our products and stocked items that people have asked for. Thanks to everyone who has helped to make it a success.

## VEG BOXES

Did you know - we now sell veg boxes for just £5.00?

Each box contains the staples for a family of four for a week: potatoes, carrots, onions, greens, and whatever else is in season. They have proved so popular that we now sell fruit and salad boxes too.



## What's new in the shop

We are constantly trying to source new products for the Farm Shop and our range continues to expand. We have recently joined a food group based in Warwickshire: Heart of England Fine Foods. This gives us access to local foods produced in Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire and Shropshire; some of which we have been trying out in the shop. Particular favourites have been strawberry coulis (delicious drizzled over ice cream), Warwickshire "melt-in-the-mouth" Fudge and organic sprouting seeds. There is a huge range of delicious foods out there: we just have to find it. If there are any foods you'd like us to try, just let us know and we'll try to find it for you. Don't forget to visit the Farm Shop on any Saturday in May where lots of foods will be available for tasting.

## Seasonal Herb Mornings at the Farm Shop

Get out of the office/house or away from the children for a morning and prepare to get your hands a bit dirty!  
Do you grow herbs but don't know what to do with them?  
Do you want a herb garden but think growing herbs is too difficult? Want to know how to enhance the flavour of your food with minimum effort?  
Come to our seasonal herb morning and we will help! Morning to include cold cookery demonstration, recipe ideas to inspire you, propagation and cultivation tips, and price includes a free grow-your-own herb kit.

19th May and 23rd June  
9.30am - 12.30pm session  
£20 per person (£10 deposit required)  
Spaces limited to 12 per session  
If you would like to come along, please contact Emily of The Thyme to Grow Herb Company by email: [mail@thyme-to-grow.co.uk](mailto:mail@thyme-to-grow.co.uk) or visit the Thyme to grow website: [www.thyme-to-grow.co.uk](http://www.thyme-to-grow.co.uk) where you can submit your details and pay your deposit.

## ORDERING SERVICE

Several people are now using our ordering service. If you're busy and on the go, but still want to eat fresh, tasty produce why not phone or email your order through to us? If we receive the order by Wednesday night we can make it up for collection from the Farm Shop on Saturday morning. Fruit, veg, fresh bread, dairy, sausages - in fact anything we sell in the shop can be ordered in advance for quick collection.  
Either email us on [meadowsweetbeef@btinternet.com](mailto:meadowsweetbeef@btinternet.com) or ring on 01295730668, or send us a message via our website: [www.meadowsweetfarmshop.co.uk](http://www.meadowsweetfarmshop.co.uk) and we'll get your order ready for you.

## FARM SUNDAY - 13th June.

This year we will be celebrating Farm Sunday with an orchid walk.

We have a large expanse of Marsh and Common Spotted Orchids growing on the farm. They are usually in full flower by mid June, so we thought we'd celebrate Open Farm Sunday by taking a walk across the fields to see them. Meet at the bottom of Horley opposite the Old Forge at 10.30am on Sunday 13th June and we'll set off across the fields to see them. There will be other points of interest along the way and we will walk through our fields where the cattle graze. The walk is approximately 2 miles in length and should take about 90 minutes. Appropriate footwear should be worn as the orchids grow in a boggy area which is quite wet under foot! **Please note: parking is very limited** at the bottom of the village so cars should be parked further up Wroxtton Lane. It is only a short walk down to the field from the village. Grid reference: SP417434. If there's time and if people would like to visit the shop, we'll open up after the walk so you can see what goodies we stock in the shop.



Thanks for your continued support, and we look forward to seeing you soon.

Martin, Emma, Lucy & William Hamer

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