

John Lycett's blog – October, 2023



Here we are at the end of October and I'm standing by the big tree at Wykey reminiscing with a neighbour.

This tree, according to the arboriculturists, could be 700 years old. I wish it could talk.

Anyway, the gate's open so let's see what the team have been up to this month.



It's been a very busy month. They started off by re-drilling a small area of oilseed rape owing to a flea beetle infestation but that, now, and the rest of it, looks very well.

They then harvested the maize which yielded well, some over 20 tonnes/acre with 33% dry matter. This is surprising after the way it looked in June.

Next, they lifted a field of sugar beet which has been washed and some of it chopped for the digester.

While all this has been going on, the drilling team have been sowing wheat after the harvested potato, maize and sugar beet land. They have kept up exceptionally well. They have also drilled 230 acres on a recently rented farm.



Also, Steve is up to date with the spraying.

Then on 20th October, the country was hit by the storm Babet. More of that later.

Simon has dipped his toe into a little bit of grain selling which is a very difficult task at the moment. Back in March, November '23 wheat was £220/tonne. Today it's £187.

Anyone can sell wheat on a rising market but it's very difficult, when the market is dropping and fluctuating downwards each week, to know when it's 'bottomed out'.

Ryan is leaving the farm soon so good luck to him on his new challenge.

Storm Babet – I cannot say how much rain we've had because my rain gauge overtopped like the rivers here, but I feel for the farmers on the Shropshire/Welsh border who still have maize and potatoes to harvest and who have had to house their stock earlier than they would have planned.



On the farm here, they had roughly 40 acres flooded, we'll see what damage has been done as time goes on.



In one of the woods, they have started a bit of tree thinning, which is part of a Forestry Commission scheme.

There appears to be a never-ending amount of solid digestate and chicken muck to move.

To end, I will just mention the sheep. They are clearing up grass and lucerne fields and will eventually go on to cover crops. As Turnip Townsend might have said "The tread of the golden hoof!"

Time to shut the gate, hoping next month is drier.