

John Lycett's blog – September, 2024

Weather - Downpour, deluge, storm, cloudburst, rainstorm, mist, drizzle, you name it, we've had it this month.

On one day, we had 69.2 ml, the second wettest here since records began. In September, we had fourteen days of rain out of the thirty.

As I'm sitting in my office today, it is sunny and dry. Can we please have more?

When I arrived at W H Gittins & Sons, a long time ago, the old boys on the farm seemed to take the weather in their stride. As Brownie (Dennis Brown) used to say "It'll be better next year!". Jake (Jack Edwards), "Ah! It's a bit daggly!" and Steve Smith, the present farm manager, uses one of Harold Davies's saying "It'll come!".

Harvest - Steve finished combining at home in August, then moved to Cockshutt to finish off some wheat for a friend. He then went to Weston Lullingfields to clear up some more wheat there which had to be dried.

Sam then got the triple mower out and cut any grass that was worth doing plus lucerne to leave the fields tidy for winter. The silage team went to Bagley and direct-cut some spring triticale whole crop cereal. This was a low input SFI crop and was put in the silage pit.

Steven has been busy sowing cover crops; mustard for green manure, stubble turnips for sheep keep and now he's busy sowing winter wheat. Because it's so wet at the moment, two ploughs are being used to keep in front of the power harrow combination drill.

Grain sales – Quite a bit of wheat has been sold forward. There is a quantity of milling wheat but I don't think Simon has dipped his toe in the market yet!



Seen here is the dressing of some home-saved seed with the use of our new electric forklift truck.

Other jobs this month include liquid digestate spreading and chicken muck hauling and the continuation of loading and drying forage on our drying floors.



In the spring, I mentioned we were clearing a wood. This has now been cleared and the ground has been prepared for replanting this autumn.



I know sometimes, you see pictures in my blog, of robotic machines and driverless tractors but in Shropshire this week, a methane powered Ford tractor was spotted again.

Agriculture has changed and is changing fast. We all need a very bright crystal ball!