

John Lycett's blog – August 2025

I am sitting in my vehicle on the Mill Dam field, looking at a field of energy beet and thinking about the weather. It is struggling a bit due to the recent lack of water which makes me think that farming is 20% management and 80% weather. The drought this summer has cost the industry a great deal.



Picture of maize in drought showing the difference in crop when it is by or under a tree (foreground). There are about 40 oak trees in all around the maize fields which affect the yields.

I do like oak trees though!

The yields across all crops, which include energy beet, lucerne and grass, are going to be lower than average. This could result in a fodder shortage later in the year.

The grain yields are between the lowest of 5.492 tonnes/ha and the highest of 11.144 tonnes/hectare with an average of 8.015 tonnes/hectare over 612.4 acres.

In 2020, 551,000 tonnes of feed wheat were imported and in 2025, 1,704,000 tonnes. Is this helping to depress the present spot price?

1965, feed wheat was £25/tonne which should today be approximately £590.00!!

The Spot price today for feed wheat for November 2025 = £168/tonne.

Spot price today for milling wheat for November 2025 = £191/tonne.

So please do not blame the primary producer for food inflation.

Granny used to say “when the farmers do well, the country does well.”

A total of 1187 acres of contract farm and rented land have been combined with very little drying needed and now it's all in store. Steven is monitoring the grain temperatures, ensuring that all fans are working as they should and the storage is right until it is sold.

Steve Smith started combining at the end of June and in between times he has forage-harvested third cut grass, then, after combining, went straight into the maize harvest which is about three weeks earlier than usual. While this has been going on, Sam has cut and forage-boxed third cut lucerne.

Meanwhile, Mark and George have been working down ground for oil seed rape which has been drilled and rolled and, on some of the farms, some cover crops have been drilled.

Next year's rape crop, up and growing already.



The team have also been spreading liquid and solid digestate. It's always busy on the farm but this harvest they have excelled themselves.

John Aled Griffiths OBE (1930-2025)

This month the we lost a good friend who helped the farm a lot in its pioneering days.

Aled was a forward-thinking farmer and an entrepreneur in the egg production business, whom I have known for over fifty years. I first met Aled when I went to collect a potato ridger which he was lending to the farm. I also had the privilege of accompanying him to several international rugby matches. A very likeable and generous man. RIP Aled.