

John Lycett's blog – June 2026

Last month I asked for rain so by the time Sam and Steven went to Cereals at Diddly Squat Farm in Oxfordshire, it rained all day. A lot of effort goes into preparing for this event, growing the plots and putting on demonstrations, so that was very disappointing.

Back at home, it has been a very busy month. Steve Smith and his team have been busy filling up the silage pits with different fodder crops. He has already had the combine out harvesting some barley which was eleven days earlier than last year. Sam has been keeping the drying floors filled with lucerne continuously and that which has been baled has already left the farm.

Steven has also desiccated the rape crop. This crop has looked well since planting so I wait in anticipation to see what arrives at the weighbridge

Also, we have also had a heatwave which, we are told, has broken all records.



These two crops are making a mockery of the weather as they are growing remarkably well.

Surprisingly, the lucerne and maize crops have been resilient to the high temperatures.

The maize crop, in particular, is loving the sun!



I do remember the heatwave of 1976 when the potato yield was dismal and the cows at Hall Farm seemed to walk the front paddocks looking if they could eat their front feet! And, if I could just go back to my childhood days in the forties and fifties, when every summer was hot, Pierce, the waggoner at Lythwood Farm, where I grew up, would say "Ey lad, it's bostin' 'ot" or "Proper roastin'" or "The big yellow candle in the sky is blazin'". Other words he used to describe the weather were "Claggy" and "Swullockin".

I can't finish without mentioning Hanley Hall, which I mentioned in my last blog. We have been farming this for the past few years for the late David Morris. After much interest, it has now been sold to a local farming family.

Finally, I would like to mention the sister of Minty and Gypsy Bayliss, who both work on the farm at Wykey, one in the office and one on the farm. In memory of their mother, who sadly died in 2022, the countdown is on for Sophie Bayliss as she prepares to tackle Mount Kilimanjaro! Sophie is fundraising for Shropshire Rural Support and the Welsh Air Ambulance by attempting to climb Kilimanjaro.

See Shropshire Rural Support's Facebook page for more on her amazing challenge.

"I'm doing it for the rural communities and the farmers that keep this country running. I am Climbing for the Countryside!" says Sophie.

Good Luck Sophie!