

farmers &
mercantile
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Rural Information Summary November 2019



ARABLE | LIVESTOCK | MOTOR | ENVIRONMENTAL | DIVERSIFICATION | SMALLHOLDERS

Lamb

Lamb prices are still well above the five year average for this time of year and are up compared to this time last year. Prices at the beginning of November were up by £10/head to average around £60/head. With the recent wet weather, trade was thought to have been dampened; but the opposite has happened. Industry reports suggest that the recent price increases across the sheep sector are due to the increasing demand for the product in the run up to Christmas.

(Source - AHDB Beef & Lamb)



Please contact us at your convenience to discuss your requirements

Cattle

Cattle prices rose during November which is the first time since August. Cattle prices tend to face seasonal pressure at this time of year as farmers prepare for housing cattle for the winter

Prices are likely to start to increase as we go into December, this is due to the demand over Christmas time and should continue to rise over the next few weeks

(Source - AHDB Beef & Lamb)



Pigs

Pig prices have risen considerably over the last few weeks and are 14p higher than this time last year and the five year average. The demand for pork is normally at its highest throughout the winter months.

(Source – AHDB Pig)

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Arable

In 2019 yields were exceptionally high in all main crops, with the average winter wheat yield at 9.9/ha, which is 17% higher than 2018. Winter Barley also performed better than previous years, with yields 14% higher than 2018.

However, Oil Seed Rape only averaged 3.4/ha, which is 1% higher than 2018 and 1% higher than the five year average. This seems to be because of the cabbage stem flea beetle infestation and a dry spring.

(Source – AHDB, DEFRA, Farmers Weekly)

Average Spot Prices

Arable Crops (£ per tonne)	A year ago	November 2019	Change
Feed Peas	210	170	↓
Oilseed Rape	319	322	↑
Feed Barley	163	119	↓
Milling Wheat	174	152	↓
Feed Wheat	165	136	↓
Hay & Straw	60	60	↔
Potatoes	£160£/t	180£/t	↑
Milk Prices (per litre)	29.00ppl	29.50ppl	↑

Farmer's reaction to BBC's prime time anti-meat programme

Farmers have recently been accusing the BBC of biased reporting after the hour long documentary "Meat: A Threat to Our Planet?"

The programme examined the environmental effects of livestock production around the world by including including footage and interviews from intensive pig units, cattle feedlots, showing the scale of production and the impact on the worlds atmosphere.

The programme claimed that the 40% of the world's crops are fed to livestock and not people, while one third of the world's biodiversity loss was caused by farming animals.

This obviously caused a huge amount of frustration to farmers, with the programme showing a very distorted picture of UK farming, with almost no acknowledgment that UK meat production is completely different. Many people took the chance to vent over numerous social media sites such as twitter to state their views, such as the BBC providing "fake news" for suggesting that livestock produce more carbon dioxide than transport.

(Source - Farmers Weekly)

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Getting Your House Ready for the Winter

Property owners should start to consider making sure their homes and properties are as ready for winter as possible. It is important to get your home ready for strong winds, rain and snow. The following should be done to help prevent any losses over the Christmas period:

- Pipes, outside taps and header tanks are fully insulated
- Make sure the gutters and pipes are clear of leaves and debris. This will allow rainwater to run freely and not accumulate on roofs or find its way into properties. Inspect trees as branches can break due to snow loads
- Heating should be kept on a low setting at all times to keep the property warm, as this actually saves energy and avoids condensation
- Check for any cracked, missing or loose tiles and replace them. If a roof is in disrepair, strong winds and the weight of snow can cause damage
- Damaged chimneys should be repaired, by looking for cracks and loose render around chimney pots and at the roof join. High winds and heavy rain can cause further damage to chimneys.
- If you happen to be out of the house for long periods of time, it would be wise to let someone know where your water stopcock is - preferably a neighbour who will have a spare key to your property.

(Source – Ideal House, Strutt & Parker)

Being Winter Ready on the Farm

As the days are now colder and the weather is increasingly wetter, farmers need to make sure they are prepared for the worst. Farming can be a dangerous occupation, and it is more so when severe weather arrives. The last few winters have brought some very severe conditions, such as heavy snowfall and extensive flooding in some areas. Planning can help to minimise the effects on the farm, along with taking into consideration your own safety.

Cold Weather & Snow

- Prevent your machinery and water supplies freezing up by having thermostatically controlled heaters in the pump house
- For dairies, place an insulation blanket over the entrance to the milking parlour which may help prevent milking machines freezing up
- The anti freeze levels in all machinery should be checked
- Plan how to get food and water to your stock if bad snow falls or flooding were to happen
- When searching for animals in snow, wear high visibility clothing so you can be easily seen
- Have a plan to clear routes around your farm buildings, along with having a stock of gritting material and salt

Please contact us at your convenience to discuss your requirements

Looking after your livestock

- Maximise grass growth during the main growing season to build a reserve of winter feed
- Do a fodder budget in spring to establish feed requirements for the next winter
- Have grit and salt available which will ensure access to sheds in the event of icy or snowy conditions
- Have a plan to deal with power outages

Flooding

- If your farm is prone to flooding, you should move your livestock to areas you can access if flooding risk is high
- Secure valuable equipment and fuel supplies
- Carefully assess the depth of floods before driving through them
- Use suitable vehicles if you have to drive through them

(Source – Farming UK)

Exchange rates

Currency		This Morning	One Week ago	Fortnight ago	3 Months Ago	6 Months ago	One Year ago
€:£	£1 =	€1.166	€1.167	€1.166	€1.103	€1.132	€1.129
	€1=	0.857p	0.856p	0.856p	0.905p	0.881p	0.889p
\$:£	£1=	\$1.284	\$1.293	\$1.285	\$1.266	\$1.328	\$1.275
	\$1=	0.778p	0.773p	0.777p	0.819p	0.789p	0.781p

Exchange rate alterations over the last 6 years:

Year	€1=	£1=
2012	0.789p	€1.262
2013	0.859p	€1.163
2014	0.795p	€1.251
2015	0.733p	€1.378
2016	0.861p	€1.160
2017	0.923p	€1.108
2018	0.905p	€1.104

(Source - OFX.com)

Please contact us at your convenience to discuss your requirements

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