

Rural Information Summary December 2019

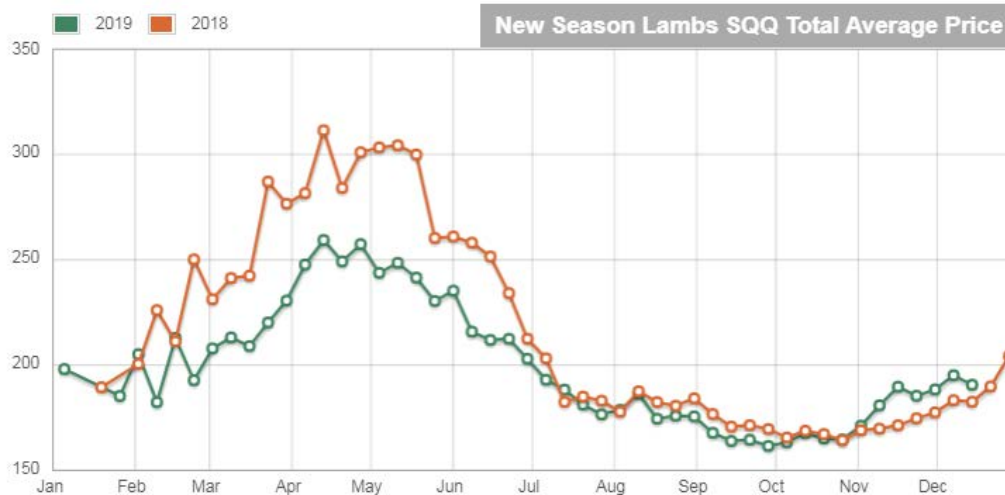


Lamb

Lamb prices rose slightly at the beginning of December, but have decreased while heading into January. Prices have continued to follow seasonal trends this Christmas while standing just above last year's figures.

(Source – AHDB Beef & Lamb)

Prime New Season Lambs



Please contact us at your convenience to discuss your requirements

Cattle

Cattle prices stand roughly the same as last year. The Christmas demand normally lifts the price, which has been the case this year. Reports suggest that the demand may continue to pick up in the next few weeks as New Year trading in Cattle is more robust.

(Source – AHDB Beef & Lamb)

Prime Cattle



Turkey


Turkey prices are likely to increase by 5% this Christmas, which helps cover a rise in production costs. Due to notable increases in packaging costs (15%), precision labour and fuel, this has pushed the cost per bird up by around £2. Consumers generally have an idea about how much they want to spend on a turkey over Christmas, which means they often reduce the size of the purchase when prices go up.

The value of frozen turkey sales rose by 5.5% in 2019, which was driven by higher sales of crowns and joints.

(Source – Poultry World)

Please contact us at your convenience to discuss your requirements

Arable

Arable Crops (£ per tonne)	A year ago	December 2019	Change
Feed Peas	212	173	
Oilseed Rape	316	317	
Feed Barley	162	117	
Milling Wheat	173	152	
Feed Wheat	164	138	
Hay & Straw	68	50	
Parsnips	1.22	1.00	
Milk Prices (per litre)	31.52ppl	30.00	

(Source – AHDB, DEFRA, Farmers Weekly)

Growing and selling your own Christmas Trees

Growing Christmas Trees has become more popular with UK farmers over the last few years. With no planning permission needed, farmers with enough fertile ground can get started straight away.

At a minimum, the budget for growing needs to include five years worth of transplants, plus the cost of labour to plant, along with pruning, harvesting and selling. It will probably take farmers up to five years to start making a profit, with only standard public liability insurance needed.

A farmer from Essex who has been growing Christmas trees for 8 years has recently invested in Danish machinery, which includes the Egedal JT PROFF two row planter, which can plant 300-400 trees an hour on set 20m tramlines. This multipurpose machine is used for spreading fertiliser, spraying, pruning and harvesting trees. YaraMila complex fertiliser is used to create the classic dark green colour and to help create the popular Christmas tree shape. This shape is created by taking out the middle branch during the winter months and is commonly known as fork pruning.

Top tips for Christmas tree growers

- Christmas trees will not yield well on wet soil
- Source seedlings from a trusted and established Christmas tree supplier
- Test your soil for nutrient availability and rectify if necessary
- Get advice on how to retail your trees, as you don't want to be over priced

(Source - Farmers Weekly)

Please contact us at your convenience to discuss your requirements

Wonky Vegetables

Morrison's will be giving away 125,000 bags of wonky carrots to children before Christmas. With "Carrots for Rudolph" being handed out from 493 Morrison's stores on the 21st of December.

This is aimed at introducing the concept of wonky vegetables and to try and encourage families to buy the range which will help tackle food waste. Even though carrots are plentiful over Christmas time, there are likely to be shortages due to flooding which has affected more than half of the UK's carrot growing areas. Only Scotland and some parts of East Anglia have been unaffected.

2019 started off with exceptional growing for carrots with above average yields, however there is now further risk of losses from frost damage as the wet weather has prevented straw being put down to protect crops.

(Source - Strutt & Parker)

Is your farm ready for a freezing cold Winter?

As we know the freezing weather conditions affect farmers in several ways, with significant effects such as provision of feed and water to livestock, the delivery of feed to farms and the transport of products from farms. Farmers can find water pipes to sheds and outdoor water troughs frozen, along with the freezing of milking machines and other equipment in the milking parlour, all causing huge problems.

Dairy cows must have access to drinking water at all times, as a cow that produces 30L of milk and being fed a silage based diet requires 75-90L (16-20 gallons) of water per day. This is the same for finishing animals on high levels of dry feed, which have a large demand for water. These animals should always have free access to water, as an animal that consumes 10kg of dry feed will need 60L (13 gallons) of water daily.

It is recommended that Farmers do the following:

- Farmers should make sure the boiler and heating systems are serviced regularly by a competent contractor
- Farmers should understand the dangers of frozen pipes and ensure they locate the stopcock/stop valve
- If properties are empty for a long period of time, turn off the water supply at the mains and drain down the entire cold water system
- To remember to protect your oil supply from freezing, as the oil supply pipe can be protected with weather proof insulation

(Source -AgriLand)

Please contact us at your convenience to discuss your requirements

Keeping Children safe on the farm this Winter

Families are warned of the dangers of poor and hazardous weather conditions this winter, and should take extra care when children are on the farm.

Top safety tips for children are:

- Children should never be alone on the farm
- When children visit farms, they should have the dangers explained to them
- After dark there should be proper lighting in areas where people are working or visiting
- Farm yards should be kept tidy, to help reduce trips and falls
- Farmyards are not playgrounds, and suitable play areas should be set up elsewhere
- Extra clothing layers should be tucked in with no hanging strings to ensure they don't get snagged in machinery

Farmers should only give children jobs that are suitable, such as feeding hens and stacking buckets.

(Source -ThatsFarming)

Exchange Rates

Currency		This Morning	One Week ago	Fortnight ago	3 Months Ago	6 Months ago	One Year ago
€:£	£1 =	€1.176	€1.187	€1.174	€1.132	€1.115	€1.107
	€1=	0.850p	0.842p	0.851p	0.889p	0.896p	0.889p
\$:£	£1=	\$1.311	\$1.317	\$1.293	\$1.230	\$1.238	\$1.275
	\$1=	0.762p	0.759p	0.773p	0.812p	0.788p	0.789p

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)

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insurance brokers

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