

Thoughts from a Northern Mart. January 2008

Threat of Hose pipe ban recedes for Yorkshire.

In the words of one farmer 'it has not stopped raining this year' and once again flooding dominates the news. As this report is being typed, heavy rain continues to fall and without stating the obvious, I think we are all aware that land is wet!

Foot & Mouth/ Blue Tongue .

With the easing of restrictions and the recommencement of beef and lamb exports, the price of lamb has at last started to move into positive territory for the first time in many months. With lambs now averaging over £1 a kilo there is still a lot of ground to make up for all the lambs poorly sold as a result of the depressed marketing that followed the out break of Foot and Mouth. As politicians remain silent over where responsibility for the original outbreak lies, farmers find it hard to stomach that the industry will have to pay for further policing and costs associated with any future outbreaks. Our project will be involved in trying to influence an agreement on costs.

Finance.

With more than 50,000 Single Farm Payments now paid, farmers are very grateful for prompt payment and hope that the balance of claims can be paid as soon as possible. A lot of this money has been absorbed by banks as farming's borrowings had reached an all time high. With the price of OSR breaking through the £300 @ ton barrier and wheat around £150 a ton for next harvest the fortunes of arable farming look more positive than those of the livestock farmer, especially those involved in intensive livestock production. Shock waves have already gone around the North with the collapse of a major pig farming operation and although most of the pigs have been now been taken on by a bigger operator which may suggest that prices will more likely be reduced than increased. All other sectors are being affected by the rising cost of oil, fertilizer and the cost of feeding livestock.

Shows and other events .

The Show season will soon be starting again and farmers will be once again pulling in the crowds showing high quality stock. It provides many with a chance to get off the farm and relax. Those of you who live in the areas covered by the Singing Farmers (see below) can go to their concerts and support RABI who, like all the other Farming Charities is doing sterling work. All the Farming Charities have record numbers of people needing them. Please try and support them where you can.

RABI 01865 72 78 88 F C N 0845 367 9990 ARC- Addington 02476 690 587

Bob Baker

CRC, Rural Development Officer (Northern Dales)

Thirsk Rural Business Centre,

Blakey Lane

Thirsk,

YO7 3AB Tel: 01845 525757 Mob: 07968 171045

bob.baker@crc-online.org.uk

Singing Farmers Concerts

The highly popular Singing Farmers - a big success throughout East Yorkshire. Performing at Pocklington Arts Centre, Milton Rooms, Malton, Wensleydale School, Leyburn and Skipton Auction Mart. These are wonderful 'farming folk' events and we thank everyone who attended. So far we have raised around £30,000. A third CD is now also available. Contact Chris on 01845 577326.