



A TRIBUTE TO CHRIS WARE

As many of you would have heard by now, Chris Ware passed away on Friday 29th October. I would like to pay tribute to Chris and his dedication to the farming industry.

Alongside Bill, Reed and myself, Chris was instrumental in building the foundations of Harpers Home Mix.

Chris treated his customers like family, calling on them regularly to do their costings, farm audits, locomotion and body condition scoring of their cows. He was always fun to be with, many a time telling you a story about a certain farmer when you drove past their lane.

Although Chris was an agent for Harpers, we had mutual respect for each other. As far as I was concerned, he was one of my team, and he looked upon me as his Boss (obviously second to Andrea, his wife).

Now, most reps struggle to give up their customers, but Chris understood and had the foresight to start handing over customers to our younger sales team 2 - 3 years ago so that his customers had continuity.

He loved the enthusiasm of our younger salespeople, always telling me I've got a cracking team.



On the Sunday before Chris passed away, he was still taking feed orders in his hospital bed and texting me to say 'I'm still cuffing Boss'.

Thank you, Chris, keep sipping the Grouse. We'll keep cuffing down here.

You will be missed by everyone at team Harpers.

MAKING THE MOST OF SURPLUS LAMBS



Matt Dymond
Ruminant Feed Specialist
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Attention to detail and a polished lamb rearing system has helped Kevin and Jacquie Daniel streamline their time when dealing with surplus lambs.

The couple farm 120ha in Trebursye, near Launceston, with most of the land down to permanent pasture. They run a flock of 1,000 North Country Mules, which are put to a Texel ram. Around half the ewes lamb indoors from early March while later ewes lamb outdoors.

As they scan near 210% before lambing, a high number of ewes will be carrying triplets.

As they always take one of the three lambs away, usually the weakest, they can have anywhere up to 190 lambs that need rearing support.

At the start, early lambs are bottle fed but once they get into double figures of surplus lambs, they move onto a Volac automated feeder with Lamlac Freeflow. All surplus lambs start off in a nursery pen.

When they are feeding confidently, they move on to the next pen where they are offered Harpers Lamb Start 2 Finish Pellets, barley straw and fresh water.

Designed to be fed ad-lib from one week old, Lamb Start 2 Finish Pellets are very palatable and contain Sel-Plex to promote early lamb vigour.

Haylage is introduced around two months before turning out to help acclimatise the lambs' rumens to grass and roughage, and lambs are fully weaned at 17kg.

They run with the rest of the flock and are separated into the weight bands when they go out. There is little difference in the health of the hand reared lambs.

Talk to your Feed Specialist for more information on our range of lamb milk powders and starter feeds.

Farming thoughts

Well, where has the last twelve months gone? This time last year, with Brexit looming, it was going to be the end of the British sheep industry. Roll the clocks forward, and it's probably been the best twelve months for a very long time. Financially, lambs are trading about £20 more than this time last year with forward pricing of lambs and beef looking promising.

Congratulations to Arla for setting the pace on milk price increases. With milk production currently running two litres down on last year, across the UK, there is only one way milk prices can go. There are a lot of supermarket contracts coming up for renewal in January, I see no reason at all why processors base prices cannot be 38-40ppl by Easter. This is where it needs to be with the ever-increasing variable costs. If not, I'm afraid more cows will be coming onto the market.

Labour and bureaucracy are the main reason for this, more than the milk price. Every industry is going through the same headaches.

I followed some of the COP26 conference, which I found very frustrating. I don't believe one person there asked the simple question 'How are we going to feed this ever-increasing population?'. I honestly believe farming is going to hit the good times red meat sales have increased by 12.6% and dairy products; cheese 4.5%, milk 4.2% over the last two years. It comes back to supply and demand.

Some of you have been reluctant to buy your fertiliser, but you cannot grow grass without it. Manufacturing across the E.U is way down. Therefore, I can't see prices dropping for a while. With feed prices looking to increase in the new year, I would take some cover on fertiliser.

Can I take this opportunity to wish our customers a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy New Year.



Glen Johns
Sales Director
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GRAINS AND STRAIGHTS UPDATE

Markets as predicted continue to remain exceptionally volatile. Even the most experienced traders have not seen markets like this!

At the time of writing, in a week soya has increased by £30/t and wheat by £20/t, with other commodities riding on the back of these prices. So, what has happened?

The USDA report on 9th November set the market in motion. Lower production and higher demand for wheat and soya led the way. Wheat production is lower by 0.6 million tonnes and demand is increasing by 0.37 million. The E.U remains competitive for exports against the rest of the world with exports up 30% on this time last year, but this is draining stocks.

Russian production is up by two million tonnes, but export taxes are prohibiting exports. The UK is set to have a low carry out from their 14 million tonne crop as we continue to export, as we are competitive.

The gap between wheat and barley has narrowed to less than £5/t as quality remains good for malting from the reduced barley crop, of last year.

Barley remains very difficult to buy going forward as both traders and farmers are reluctant sellers. Soya has been an outstanding buy for a while, and many have taken cover into next summer at the attractive levels of late October. Big crops are still anticipated in South America, and planting is progressing well. With rape at around £320/t and soya around £70/t higher, soya remains the most cost-effective protein source.

Nearby rape remains expensive, however forward prices are discounted, in particular February / April is well worth considering.

Sugar beet is trading in the £260's and is practically non-existent for the summer. Soya hulls are £20/t lower, and wheatfeed is £20/t lower again.

In the run up to Christmas it is all about logistics and supply and having ingredients in the right place. Please help us by placing your orders in advance and maximise load sizes.

If you would like to talk through anything, please do not hesitate to contact us.



Andrew Davies
Operations Director
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GET THE BEST VALUE FROM SLURRY

With fertiliser prices going through the roof, farmers are under increased pressure to make the best use of all nitrogen sources on the farm. A simple slurry treatment can improve the nitrogen available while reducing ammonia emissions.

SlurriN Pro is a blend of specific bacteria and enzymes that promotes a positive fermentation while reducing the numbers of undesirable bacteria. This has a number of big benefits.

It helps to reduce the losses in fertiliser value, leaving more nitrogen available to be applied. It helps reduce sedimentation and crusting which makes the slurry easier to handle.

Finally, treated slurry is incorporated into the soil more quickly, reducing the risk of forage contamination and cutting nitrogen losses from gas emissions.

A trial on a Devon farm showed a 16% increase in retained nitrogen compared to the untreated slurry. This equated to an extra four units per 1000 gallons of slurry.

To treat 100 dairy cows' slurry for one month, (typically 200,000 litres), a 1kg sachet should be mixed with 10 litres of clean water and distributed evenly into the liquid fraction of the slurry.



Steve Jones
Feed Specialist
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OFFER

Until 31st December 2021, buy 3 sachets of SlurriN Pro and get an extra sachet FREE.



THE NINE PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE BEEF PRODUCTION

Many customers and friends have asked me how we managed to become finalists at this years Farmers Weekly Awards in both the Grassland Manager and Environmental Champion categories.

One of the key documents we produced which the judges really liked was our Nine Principles of Sustainable Beef Production. They are not difficult to achieve but they have made a considerable difference to our business.

By using them we have achieved 1300kg liveweight gain per hectare on bucket reared calves and over 1000kg LWG from suckler calves. We have also reduced costs, built soil carbon levels and improved our environmental impact.

Our Nine Principles of Sustainable Beef Production are:

1. Use mixed swards including clover and herbs when re-seeding
2. Rotationally graze
3. Aerate the pasture
4. Ferment farmyard manure and use during the growing season
5. Use a weed wiper
6. Use your own borehole water and keep cattle out of streams and rivers
7. Minimise the use of chemical fertilisers
8. Use early maturing sires in your breeding programme
9. Minimise the use of ivermectin products when cattle are at grass

I would be delighted to hear what you think of our principles and to discuss how we can help you produce more sustainable beef.

For more information, please call the office on 01409 254 300



WHY WE NEED TO LEARN THE FORAGE LESSONS OF 2021

At the time of writing, around 40% of dairy farmers have no fertiliser cover for 2022. With current prices, I can understand why people are holding back, but the lessons we can learn from the last forage season point to the need to apply full rates to first cut, if nothing else.

You only have one first cut per year and it should be your highest quality, most productive cut of the year. You must make the best cut you can. Underfeeding the crop will not achieve this and will be a false economy.

When talking to customers, I guide them to aim to target making a 30-32% dry matter silage, with as much protein as possible and well over 11MJ/ME. Yet this year we are having to make-do with silage at around 10.8-11MJME and 11% protein (see table).

There were two main reasons for this. The first is that the early spring was cold and plants did not take up nitrogen from the soil, which lead to poor protein in the grass.

The second is that the wet May delayed cutting, meaning grass had gone over and many clamps are full of high NDF and low energy feeds. It is the first year I have advised customers to feed first cut to bullocks rather than the cows.

So what can we learn from this for 2022 first cut? The first thing is that if grass cannot take up nitrogen, it cannot produce protein. So you need to fertilise the crop. Even if bagged nitrogen prices are high, you still need to apply it to maximise first cuts.

Look to make the best use of slurry. Use an additive to improve nutrient content and handling capabilities. Get it analysed and use bagged N to balance it. Treat slurry as the value commodity it is, not as a 'little bit extra'.

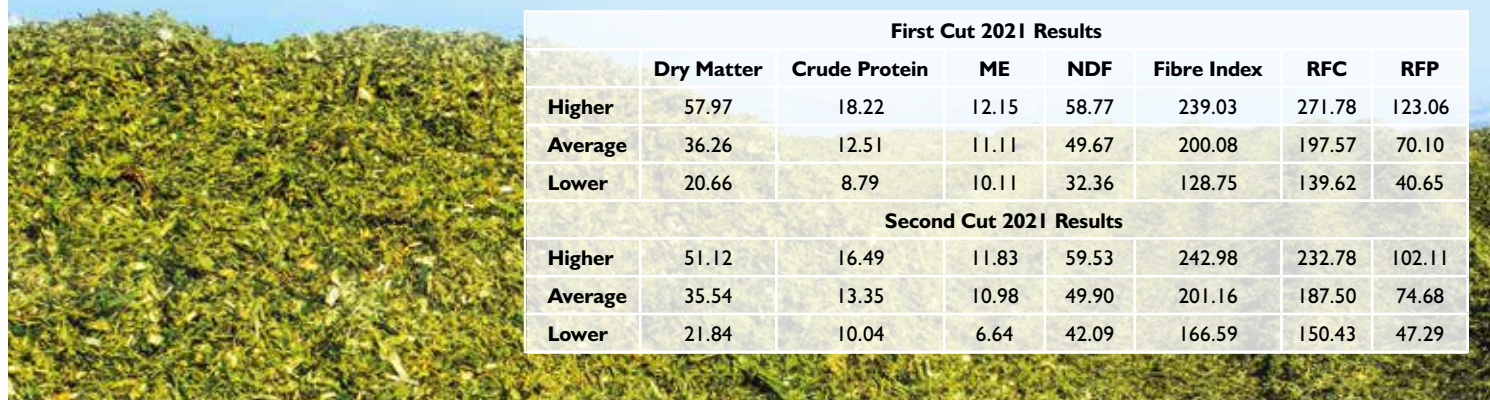
Secondly, you cannot make quality silage from poor quality grass. Once grass goes over, leaves start to die off and the stem starts to stand proud, your feed value is declining. To make a high quality first cut, you need the best raw material which is young grass.

There is no merit in carrying November and December grass over to harvest in April. This grass needs to be grazed off so that the young spring shoots turn into a quality feed.

First cut will be your best forage for next winter so you need to invest in it. My advice is to treat first cut as you would in any year, irrespective of nitrogen prices as the return on investment on fertiliser will still be good, especially if you optimise the use of slurry. Then take time to plan the rest of the year and your fertiliser use accordingly. You will almost certainly be wiser to go for fewer cuts than to adopt multicut systems at current fertiliser and fuel prices.



First Cut 2021 Results							
	Dry Matter	Crude Protein	ME	NDF	Fibre Index	RFC	RFP
Higher	57.97	18.22	12.15	58.77	239.03	271.78	123.06
Average	36.26	12.51	11.11	49.67	200.08	197.57	70.10
Lower	20.66	8.79	10.11	32.36	128.75	139.62	40.65
Second Cut 2021 Results							
	Dry Matter	Crude Protein	ME	NDF	Fibre Index	RFC	RFP
Higher	51.12	16.49	11.83	59.53	242.98	232.78	102.11
Average	35.54	13.35	10.98	49.90	201.16	187.50	74.68
Lower	21.84	10.04	6.64	42.09	166.59	150.43	47.29



SUCCESS WITH HARPERS SHEEP FEEDS

Congratulations to our customer, Ross Lawrence who won overall pre-sale champion at Western Wonders Monmouth livestock sale on Saturday 13th November with his Suffolk shearing ewe. The ewe sold for the top price of 5000gns.

The Roundacre pedigree flock, based in Iddesleigh, are fed Harpers 18% Ewe Master Nuts alongside Harvest Tup Mix + Ammonium Chloride + Yeast. The balance and quality of protein in this diet ensures a healthy and productive ewe.

A fine specimen and worthy winner!



SUCCESS WITH OUR BEEF RATIONS

At the recent Devon Cattle Breeders Society Autumn Show and Sale, Harpers customer, Steve Cleverdon won the Senior Bull Class and Overall Breed Champion with his two year old Fieldsman. Fieldsman is a Red Ruby Devon with, by all accounts, 'proper breeders bull' qualities.

As a newcomer to showing bulls, Steve, who farms at Coombe Farm in Hatherleigh is enjoying making the best of his stock.

It was not down to beginners' luck that he walked away with Breed Champion. Fieldsman's genetics and feeding regime have been closely monitored and measured. Calves are fed on 18% Calf Rearing Molassed Mix ad-lib from around three months old to maximise growth rate potential. After weaning, youngstock are fed 16% Calf Rearing Molassed Mix and Fieldsman was finished on Harvest

16% Coarse Mix+ Yeast, to gain the correct fat cover, conformation levels and coat shine. The results speak for themselves!

Congratulations to Steve Cleverdon, for rearing a prize-winning breeding bull!



For more information on our beef feeds, please speak to your Feed Specialist.

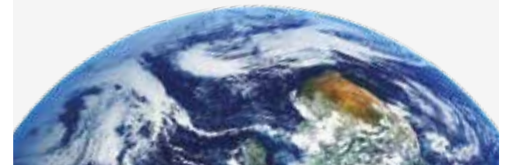
NEW BIGGER PLANET RANGE

The Planet concept is the first range of compounds and blends formulated to specifically exclude any soya and palm products in the diet; the ingredients most closely linked to environmental concerns.

Following the initial launch of Planet dairy feeds in 2020, we are delighted to announce that the Planet range now includes beef, sheep, youngstock, pig and poultry diets.

As a company we are continually looking at ways to help our customers meet the growing environmental demands placed upon them by their producers and processors.

For more information, please speak to your Feed Specialist.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Date	Event	Location
Tuesday 7th December	Harpers Sheep Meeting <i>Booking required</i>	Honiton Rugby Club 6.30pm
Wednesday 8th December	Harpers Sheep Meeting <i>Booking required</i>	Trethorne Leisure, Launceston 6.30pm
Saturday 11th December	Wadebridge VS Bideford Rugby <i>Booking required</i>	Wadebridge RFC 1.00pm
Saturday 8th January 2022	Bideford VS Chard Rugby Sponsored with Torch Vets <i>Booking required</i>	Bideford RFC 1.00pm
Tuesday 11th January 2022	Sheep Meeting <i>Booking required</i>	Portmore Golf Club, Barnstaple 6.30pm
Thursday 20th January 2022	Sheep Meeting <i>Booking required</i>	Dartmoor Lodge, Ashburton 6.30pm
Saturday 29th January 2022	North Tawton VS Bude Rugby <i>Booking required</i>	North Tawton RFC 1.00pm

CHRISTMAS OPENING HOURS

We are only closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day, Monday 27th and Tuesday 28th December but our normal delivery days may be subject to change.

The last order date before Christmas is **Tuesday 14th December** and the last order date before New Year is **Tuesday 21st December**.

Please help us help you by providing as much spread as possible during the holiday season. Thank you for your co-operation.

Everyone at Harpers Feeds and Harpers Farm Supplies wishes all our customers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Harpers Farm Supplies have a wide variety of products eligible under the DEFRA Farming Investment Fund. A full list of eligible products can be found on their website www.farmersdirect.co.uk. For more information, please call the store on 01409 259 600.



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