

The Market Report

Professional Ponderings – August 2024

I think that many will agree that the past week or so of sun has been welcome and from driving around Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire it appears that many people have made a start with combining and the Oilseed Rape appears to be complete, Barley is well under way and the Winter Wheat is ripening well with the extra sun. A lot of people will be questioning Oilseed Rape in their rotation this coming season and although it is a good break crop, the low yields and the high-risk establishment to avoid the flea beetle and pigeons, mean it is not a crop that you want to be worrying whether it will break even or not and relying on the one in approximately three-year bumper crop.

Livestock prices seem settled with fat lambs consistently around 300 pence per kilo assisting many farmers with their cash flow. However, it seems strange that the price of wheat is low with feed wheat at £175 per tonne considering the reduced area of wheat drilled with the expected lower yields following the poor growing conditions through winter and spring. Does this mean yields are better than expected?

My first month at Bletsoes has flown by and I have been busy undertaking a variety of work from tenancy matters to planning applications for agricultural buildings plus attending the two machinery auctions, both of which were a success with strong prices achieved. Since moving back south and living on the family farm near Silverstone, any free evenings and weekends have been busy as there is always

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something to do, especially coming into harvest alongside some late summer haymaking.

Once again, the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) have changed their mind on the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI). The proposed option to upgrade and add options into an existing SFI agreement on the anniversary date has now been removed. This does not stop you adding to the area of rotational options within a current SFI agreement, but it is important to remember that you must plant at least 50% of the rotational area within the agreement, each year. If you were planning to add to your SFI agreement this is now only possible by creating a new agreement to run alongside any existing agreements. If possible, from a management point of view it would be easier to have the agreement commencing in the same month as before however, the start date is in the hands of the RPA, so there is no guarantee.

On a positive SFI note the RPA have released an expanded offer of 102 new options to add to the 2023 SFI options and Countryside Stewardship options under one umbrella and split into the following categories:

- actions for agroforestry
- actions for boundary features
- actions for buffer strips
- actions for farmland wildlife on arable and horticultural land
- actions for farmland wildlife and habitats on grassland
- actions for heritage
- actions for integrated pest management
- actions for moorland
- actions for nutrient management
- actions for organic farming
- actions for precision farming
- actions for species recovery and management
- actions for soil health
- actions for waterbodies

As I mentioned earlier many people will be questioning Oilseed Rape as a break crop, and now is a good time to look through the various SFI options and ponder what may fit into the rotation, while you are sat on the combine, before drilling or early cultivations commence. Combining will also remind you of all the awkward shaped fields and triangle corners, and these can also be entered into an SFI option such as CAHL3 Grassy field corners or blocks. The payment rate may not seem that high for the option, however, add in the time saved turning around and

shunting into these areas and the inevitably lower yields and the SFI options are probably not so bad. If you do wish to investigate the SFI options and how they can fit into a rotation, a member of the Agricultural Team will be happy to help.

The Countryside Stewardship Capital Grants will continue as they were alongside the Farm Technology Fund but the advice is to make the most of these grants while they are still available, especially with the new Chancellor Rachel Reeves reportedly looking to plug the DEFRA £20 billion black hole.

In other news for the first time since March 2020 the Bank of England base rate has dropped albeit only one quarter of a percent to 5%, this will still make a difference to Base Rate loans and mortgages which will be welcomed by many and help with cash flow of many businesses. It will also make purchasing land subject to borrowing more appealing which is good news, as Bletsoes have just brought approximately 39.21 acres of arable and permanent pasture land to the market off Walgrave Road, Old. With the following properties currently on the market:

- 0.64 acres (0.26 hectares) of Paddock Land, located off Walgrave Road, Old, Northamptonshire
- 21.05 acres (8.52 hectares) of grassland available as a whole or in two lots located off Nags Head Lane, Hargrave, Northamptonshire.
- 5.90 acres (2.39 hectares) of permanent pasture land, located off Welford Road, Spratton, Northamptonshire.
- With other instructions on the way.

Wishing farmers a successful harvest and dry weather for hay making.

George Pullin
Graduate Rural Surveyor



Our chaplain Rev. Richard Wilde, Methodist Minister, member of the Agricultural Chaplains Association and the Farming Community Network will be in attendance at the market on Tuesdays for a chat, if you would like to talk.

richardwilde.FCN@gmail.com

Stratford Forthcoming Events

Saturday 17th August

Thrapston Breeding Sheep & Ram Sale - 11.00am

At Thrapston Livestock Market

Catalogue available online

Tuesday 20th August

Prime, Cull & Store Sheep - 10.30am

Plants, Produce, Poultry & Misc - 10.00am

Tuesday 27th August

Prime, Cull & Store Sheep - 10.30am

Plants, Produce, Poultry & Misc - 10.00am

Tuesday 3rd September

Prime, Cull & Store Sheep - 10.30am

Plants, Produce, Poultry & Misc - 10.00am

*For further information regarding any of the sales
please contact the Market Team*

Stratford Market Report 2024 Advertising Tariff

Advertising Charges

1/8 Page	£10 Per Week
1/4 Page	£20 Per Week
1/2 Page	£30 Per Week
Full Page	£50 Per Week
	+ VAT

Discounted Rates Available

For further information, or to place and advert, please contact
Beth Kitchener on 01832 732241 or beth.kitchener@bletsoes.co.uk

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REPORT FOR TUESDAY 6TH AUGUST

502 Prime Lambs

Another strong week this week with the SQQ at 297.05p/kg. Lighter lambs once again commanded the trade, a good showing of quality forward with numbers far higher than expected. Please book stock in before the sale day with Auctioneer Jake Wagstaff on 07487 526803. JM Ironmonger topped the day pence per kilo with a sterling show of Texel lambs selling to 324p/kg at 41kgs. W Betteridge topped the day overall at £165.55 for 55kgs Texels with 49kgs to 310p/kg and 43kgs to 320p/kg.

Highlights - Ellsbury House saw best end lighter weight Texels to 323p/kg for 37kgs with 38kgs to 318p/kg; P & M Careless topped with another strong run of Texel and Beltex crosses to 320p/kg for 39kgs; TR Tame & Son saw the trade of the day with a run of empty Suffolk Charollais forward at 38.5kgs selling to 315p/kg, 39kgs to 311p/kg and 37kgs to 310p/kg; JD Weaver saw a smart trade for quality with 47kg Texels to 293p/kg and 43kgs to 310p/kg.

To		From		Average	
<i>Standards (32.1-39kg)</i>					
330p	£124.80	289p	£105.79	304.9p	£115.09
<i>Mediums (39.1 - 45.5kg)</i>					
324p	£137.60	285p	£112.58	293.2p	£123.23
<i>Heavies (45.6 - 52kg)</i>					
310p	£151.90	270p	£129.60	285.8p	£138.51
<i>Over 52kg</i>					
301p	£165.55	235p	£136.30	267.1p	£150.93

89 Cull Ewes & Rams

Unbelievable trade on the day with a national shortage forcing the trade. All in average £138.55! W Betteridge topped the day with Texels to £178; Ellsbury House saw a tremendous trade for Texel crosses selling to £178 for lean meat and shape; S Walby penned a run of Continental cross ewes, majority lean meat to feeding sorts topping to £169 followed by £156 for two pens and £138; AD Lane topped theirs with meat Texel crosses on the thick side selling to £156; A Cook topped the Suffolks with smaller frame meat ewes to £148; R Hall & Sons saw the trade of the day with Mule ewes selling to £134 and taking the option on for three pens. All meat ewes were seen at £125 plus with feeders at £84 to £90.

To	From	Average
£178.00	£84.00	£138.55

REPORT FOR WEDNESDAY 7TH AUGUST

Stratford Field Sale 2163 Head

Trade in both the stores and the ewe lambs were at never before seen levels with the alleys packed of new and old buyers.

Ewe Lambs - full confidence in breeding stock this year with many early breeding sales showing theaves at a high, farmers have looked to ewe lambs for replacements with a noticeable variation in buying accounts on the day. All in average saw £135.62. Lambs End topped the day with a strong showing of pure Texel ewe lambs selling to £170; GC Hodges & Son penned their usual consignment of Suffolk Mule ewe lambs being a credit to them this year looking well forward, topping to £162 for their first draw of big frames and best heads, followers were to £160 and £146 for three pens with runners to £135 twice and £132; JK Coldicott saw another fantastic draw of Suffolk Mules with a late born showing not holding them back topping to £152, £142 and £130, with runners to £125, £120 and £106; JD Weaver drew another quality run of Suffolk Mules with tappers to £148 and runners at £142; AF & RF Slatter penned a smart pen of Suffolk Mules in the first row topping to £141; Kinton Lamb saw their Lleyn cross ewe lambs to £122 for two pens; W Bartlett & Son saw their Texel crosses to £115.

Store Lambs - never before seen levels with mid to long term lambs finding by far the most demand and trade to match. All in average £102.94. F Johnson-Gibbs topped the day with best bred Texels to £152 with Charollais crosses to £130; WV Harris & Son penned well uniformed run of best bred Beltex cross Continentals seeing a high of £132 for the best shape and £128 for their following pen with the biggest frame lambs also selling to £128; Walters Farm Partnership penned a strong run of good framed Charollais crosses seeing the best to £120, with followers at £115 twice, £112, twice, £110, £108.50, £102 only to be outperformed by their Jacob cross Charollais selling to £95.50. The vast majority sold in excess of £100. The best sold look the longest term lambs looking to be around £35 dearer on the year.

DATE FOR THE DIARY

Wednesday 11th September

Field Sale of Breeding Sheep, Store Lambs & Rams
Hampshire Down Club Show & Sale

NFU SURVEY

NFU are currently conducting a **survey about tail docking and castration in lambs** to help inform discussions with the government on potential new restrictions.

We kindly ask that you complete the survey, and share the survey with your customers, to gather vital information on the impact of any proposed restrictions to the current practises of tail docking and castration within both farming businesses and the lamb market.

Please see full details and the survey link below.

Tail docking and castration in lambs is considered necessary to manage negative health and welfare impacts caused by fly-strike, or to avoid unwanted pregnancies and complications during post-slaughter processing.

Both procedures are permitted in the UK and governed by legislation however, the [Farm Animal Welfare Council's report](#) released in December 2022 discussed the implications of castration and tail docking (which are in the legal terms described as mutilation procedures) on the welfare of lambs and makes several recommendations related to these routine management procedures.

As a result of this report and due to growing pressure on the veterinary profession and resource, there is potential for regulatory changes to be taken forward by the new government.

The NFU is therefore seeking sheep producers' participation in a short survey on the lamb production and husbandry and management methods. (Open to both members and non-members)

This will provide us with a comprehensive understanding of practices within the sector and the necessary information and data to highlight the detrimental impact of introducing restrictions on these routine management procedures.

[Survey link: NFU members – take our survey on lamb castration and tail docking – NFUonline](#)

The deadline for the survey is **26 September 2024**

Please note. Question 3 – If you are NOT a NFU member please put the answer as N/A

STAFF WANTED

We are looking for an individual for Cleansing & Disinfecting duties after market.

Hours to suit. Good rate of pay.

For further information contact Jake 07487 526803

REPORT FOR TUESDAY 13TH AUGUST

192 Prime Lambs

Trade easing slightly on the week but not as much as predicted, SQQ 293.14p/kg. All meated lambs sold well with the over 45kgs a lesser trade. Caracas Holdings topped the day pence per kilo at 320p/kg for best end Beltex Texels at 40.5kgs with Townsend Farms seeing the same trade for their smartest Charollais at 37kgs. L Beames topped the day overall at £142.50 for 57kgs Suffolks.

Highlights - Lambs End penned a smart run of Texels to 310p/kg for 39kgs; A Paxton saw their Texels at a strong trade with 40kgs topping at 312p/kg and 42kgs to 305p/kg only to be bested by their 46kgs Charollais at 307p/kg. Heavy lambs sold around 250p/kg to 265p/kg.

To		From		Average	
<i>Standards (32.1-39kg)</i>					
320p	£121.60	288p	£106.20	302.1p	£112.53
<i>Mediums (39.1 - 45.5kg)</i>					
320p	£129.60	274p	£114.00	290.5p	£121.80
<i>Heavies (45.6 - 52kg)</i>					
307p	£141.22	254p	£124.20	275.3p	£133.33
<i>Over 52kg</i>					
250p	£142.50	220p	£125.40	243.9p	£134.93

82 Store Lambs

A strong sale this week with numbers starting to ramp up now, after the field sale. A good entry forward, longer term but healthy lambs on the whole, averaging £89.06. P Taylor topped the day with mid frame Suffolk lambs selling to £106, with followers at £100 and £85; Townsend Farms saw a smart run of Charollais to £99.50 with followers at £97; KD Kilmister saw their run of Charollais top to £94 with followers at £80.50. **Ram Lambs** sold around £15 less than their counterparts. Longest term lambs were still £75 plus.

To	From	Average
£106.00	£74.00	£89.06

61 Cull Ewes & Rams

Trade eased slightly on the week with a big showing of lean ewes forward averaging £89.64. Ellsbury House topped the day with a sterling show of Texel Charollais ewes selling to £150 for lean meat; A Paxton topped at £148 for Texel crosses of good meat; Lambs End saw their Texel meated ewes to £140; P Taylor topped the Suffolk trade with smart heavy frames but lean ewes to £134;

RS Hawkins topped the Mules on the day at £108. All meat was over £100. Feeding types were £70 to £80.

To	From	Average
£150.00	£39.00	£89.64

Plants, Produce, Poultry, Hatching Eggs & Sundries

Plants - More ornaments than plants at the moment, a planted head sold to £10, Garden Bench to £10, Plant Stand £10, Stone Fox £9, Post Box Bird House £8, Gargoyle £5. More items are needed.

Produce - More choice than Tesco's and a lot more fun than pushing the trolley round the isles. Briefly to include: Apples (Cookers & Eaters), Carrots, Onions, Runner Beans, Cucumbers, Tomatoes, Peppers, French Beans, Calabrese Broccoli, Plums, Courgettes, Marrows, Spring Onions, Garlic, Beetroot, Squashes, Hot Chilli's. *Prices ranging from 20p to £11, a lot less than the shops and fresher, come down and grab a bargain, to feed the family for less.*

Poultry - A better entry this week and more buyers around the pens. Poultry in the pens are sold per bird, selling to £21 for Blue Bell pullets; Speckled pullets sold to £18, Red Hyline pullets sold to £17.50, Silver Sussex pullets sold to £14, Calder Ranger pullets sold to £12, 10 week old Barbu d'Uccle Millefleur pullets sold to £6.50. In boxes they are sold per box, prices sold to £26 and £25 for Khaki Campbell ducklings, £20 for three Legbar chicks, £20 for six Buff Orpington chicks a/h, £16 for six Quail chicks a/h, £9 for seven Yokohama chicks a/h, ten Spanish Game chicks sold to £6.

Hatching Eggs - Twenty-one trays of Hen eggs sold to £6 from £5, an egg cupboard sold to £4 and an incubator for a £1, to gamble if it worked.

Sundries - Another vast array of interesting items, unwanted by some but many finding new homes, the stranger or more interesting the item the higher the price. A mini chainsaw £35, box of straw poultry £16. Bongo Drums and much more was on offer ranging from £1-£10.

Pet Food - A company supplying all sorts of pet food entered 350 Lots. Prices were a fraction of the price in the shops. Best dog food to £25 per bag instead of £60, wet dog food, wet cat food, cat food £1-£9, bird food £4-£12, also on offer dog chews, rabbit food and guinea pig feed.

We plan to hold a sale on the 2nd Tuesday of every month, the next being Tuesday 10th September.

Bletsoes

— EST. 1881 —

Eastern Region

HAMPSHIRE DOWN CLUB SHOW & SALE

At Stratford Livestock Market

Clifford Chambers, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire. CV37 8LP

Wednesday 11th September at 1pm

Judging at 11am

To include MV & Non MV Sections

Entry Forms are available by request or online

Entries to be made by Grassroots & Entry Form

Entries Close Friday 23rd August

No late entries will be accepted

For further information contact Alastair Brown – 07885 804450

Beth Kitchener – market@bletsoes.co.uk

Kevin or Jane Byford – jka.byford@btconnect.com

Preventing Water Pollution & Avoiding Cattle Watering Breaches

The Environment Agency have highlighted a number of breaches where farmers have not taken reasonable precautions to prevent agricultural diffuse pollution occurring in relation to cattle watering.

Livestock access to watercourse can cause various issues, including:

- Banks to collapse which increases flood risk
- Build-up of sediment causing pollution and damaging habitats
- Siltation and affecting how channels work
- Animal wastes in water posing a risk to human and animal health

Measures can be taken to prevent these issues:

- Fence off surface water to prevent livestock damaging the banks and fouling in the water. This will also allow natural habitats to develop which will provide protection from soil erosion
- Previously managed or constructed drinking points in watercourse are no longer recommended as they can cause poaching in one area. Alternative watering facilities should be installed.
- Position livestock feeders and drinkers away from water courses and move at frequent intervals to avoid poaching.
- Plant hedges alongside watercourse to prevent access and enhance biodiversity.

Funding through Countryside Stewardship Capital Grants is available for capital items such as fencing. Please contact a member of the Agricultural Team for further information.



DID YOU KNOW?

By using the Livestock Information Service (LIS) to report your sheep, goat and deer movements, you are not required to post a copy of your on-movement form.

All you need to do is accept the move issued by the market on your LIS account.

Get Started Today!

Save time and money using LIS online. Visit the Livestock Information website to create your LIS account today.

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LIVESTOCK
INFORMATION

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