

RED POLL BEEF E-NEWS, OCTOBER 2011

If you have received this email in error or no longer wish to receive it, please reply with a blank email headed "No Red Poll E-news."

From Huw Rowlands, The Grange, Warrington Road, Mickle Trafford, Chester CH2 4EB.

Tel. 01244 300655 / 07950 963526. Web www.redpollbeef.eu

Now on Twitter@redpollbeef

Also at <http://redpollbeef.blogspot.com>

Welcome to the October edition of our e-newsletter. The attachment is about our local produce fairs until the end of the year, and contains a voucher for our **FREE prize draw** taking place at 13:30 on Saturday 28th October. To enter, all you need to do is fill it in and bring it with you to the local produce fair for a chance of winning some great prizes including a joint of beef and other local produce kindly donated by stall holders. We look forward to seeing you on the day. We will be at Oswestry Farmers Market on Friday 28th October (09:00 to 13:00), Knutsford on Saturday 5th November (09:00 to 13:00) and at the Grosvenor Garden Centre Food Festival on Saturday & Sunday 5th & 6th November (10:00 to 16:00).

RED POLL CATTLE NEWS

As the days shorten and the grass growth slows, the Red Polls are spreading further afield. Pint Pot the Ox and Twoby the young bull are at Plemstall with a small group of Red Polls, and the other young bull, Frodo, can be seen in the field behind Beesley and Fildes next to the green lane. With him are three visiting Red Polls from Rice Lane City Farm in Walton, Liverpool. They are called Willow, Zaana and Zinia, and are with us until mid-December by which time they should be in calf and ready to return home for Christmas. At the time of writing the ground remains reasonably dry, and all the cattle are still out in the fields where they can be seen from the footpath network around the farm.

UNBLOTTED LANDSCAPE

You may have noticed that the small field immediately upstream of Trafford Bridge has had the mounds of soil on it levelled, considerably improving its appearance. They were tipped there the last time that Trafford Mill pools were dredged in about 1991! The field is now considerably higher than it used to be, and at one time many years ago was used as a small tip by Cheshire County Council.

HEDGEROW & BOUNDARY RESTORATION

Again this winter BTCV (British Trust for Conservation Volunteers) will be undertaking a significant amount of hedgerow restoration and re-planting behind the farm and next to the public footpath linking Plemstall Lane and the A56 Warrington Road.

The remains of the old fence has been removed, and gaps in the hedge will be filled with native species of hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, field maple and dog rose before the hedge is double fenced to protect it from the mouths of rapacious Red Polls. Coppicing and some crown lifting (removing low branches on mature trees to prevent them from shading the hedge) has already taken place, and the end result will be much improved wildlife habitat and a stock-proof boundary. We are grateful to Natural England and the Cheshire Wildlife Trust's Gowy Connect project for funding this work.

WILLOW SPILING

It is not twelve months since the willow spiling was installed on the bank of the River Gowy downstream from Trafford Bridge, and it has been a great success, growing as much as six feet tall in some places. The best view of it can be had from the opposite bank on the Nags Head side. This winter it will need pruning to not far from ground level, and will provide a tasty meal or two for Chester Zoo's giraffes.

GATE EXPECTATIONS

After the field at the end of The Street was illegally occupied by travellers a few years ago, we rapidly installed new metal gates and posts concreted into the ground. However it seems that even these are now not immune. The gate onto the Fork Oak Field in Picton Lane is one such, and the concrete and post with gate attached have been dug out of the ground in what appears to be an attempt at theft. The high price of scrap metal and the fact that the trade is virtually unregulated are making metal theft an increasing problem. If you see anyone acting suspiciously by gateways, they probably shouldn't be there. Any information about such activity will be gratefully received.

*Huw Rowlands
22/10/2011*

ALL OUR BEEF IS NOW LEAF MARQUE ASSURED.

Come to our Local Produce Fair on the last Saturday of each month from 10:00 to 14:00.