

RED POLL BEEF E-NEWS

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Welcome to the September edition of our newsletter keeping you up to date about events at The Grange Farm.

LOCAL PRODUCE FAIR WITH VIRTUAL POND DIPPING! 🍷

It's the local produce fair this Saturday (24th October) here at the farm from 10:00 until 14:00 when you can come along and stock up on local and seasonal produce. Highlights this month include Mike Morton's damson jam made from wild damsons picked from farm hedgerows, and Ecover washing up and laundry liquids 60 p per litre cheaper than Tesco (website 26/08/2011). Produce from Trafford Mill kitchen garden will be available in return for a donation, and you can go and have a look at the garden, too. Bring your empty bottles to refill at the produce fair. The main activity on the day will feature Cheshire Wildlife Trust and virtual pond dipping, so do come and discover what this involves and find out about the fantastic conservation work the trust is carrying out in our area through the Gowy & Mersey Washlands Living Landscapes Project and Gowy Connect. In October Janine from Cakes for a Date will be doing demonstrations and giving you ideas for Christmas.

CATTLE ON THE MOOOVE 🐄

As the days shorten and the grass growth slows, the Red Polls spread further afield. Pint Pot, our big black ox, and some of the older bullocks (castrated males) will soon be grazing the land between the railways at Plemstall, and cows will be grazing some of the fields accessible from The Street and Picton Lane. If you are walking, please remember to keep to the footpath and keep dogs on a lead, but let your dog go if you feel threatened. Many of the cattle have discovered the delights of eating apples, and I now have a torn coat pocket after Gabriella, a year old heifer (female) decided not to wait for an apple to be produced from it!

HEDGE & BOUNDARY RESTORATION 😊

British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) will be carrying out further hedge restoration this winter behind the farm thanks to Natural England and Cheshire Wildlife Trust. You will be able to see the work being done from the permissive and public footpath near the kitchen garden and a field away from Plemstall Lane. If you would like to get involved and learn about hedge laying and planting please contact BTCV at Trafford Mill on 300230. The hedges will be fenced on both sides to protect them from marauding Red Polls, and we are experimenting by planting some Sweet Chestnut near the mill. If this is successful, we will know that we can grow our own fence posts, since Sweet Chestnut posts last up to twenty years in the ground.

THE PLANTINGS 😊 😊

The old wood visible from the green lane and behind Beesley & Fildes is also going to see restoration work undertaken this winter thanks to the forestry Commission. It is known as "The Plantings" or "Scratchface Wood," and is thought to date from the mid nineteenth century and to have been planted as a wet, Alder woodland. We will be clearing Sycamore and Elder from it and coppicing willow to open up the canopy and encourage plant growth. A ditch and sluice are being reinstated on one side of the wood to try to restore the moist ground conditions; all will be protected by a cattle proof fence.

HYDRO-POWER 🏡 ⚡

Last year Cheshire West & Chester Council undertook a feasibility study on the River Gowy at Trafford Mill Sluice to determine whether it was a viable site at which to generate electricity, and concluded that it was. As ever, the financial outlay on such a project is significant, although returns are guaranteed through the Feed In Tarriff. One option might be to pursue the idea of establishing a community hydro-power scheme as has already been successfully at New Mills and Settle. If this is of interest or you have any thoughts on the best way to proceed, please do get in touch through the usual channels!

Huw Rowlands
21/09.2011

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.