

DIARY DATES

26 February 2007

FWAG on grants and funding sources
and

An introduction to the Cholmondeley Network

Tom Jackson from Cheshire Fwag and Annette McDonald double up for a bumper night (see page 2 for more info)

26 March 2007

Sheepdogs

Gus Demordy

30 April 2007

Organic Gardening

Mid-May (tbc) 2007

Stockley Farm visit

Sat 9 June 2007

Ryton Organic Garden excursion

An afternoon trip to the former Henry Double Day Research Centre near Coventry (see back page for more info)

Sat 23 June 2007

Annual CSA BBQ

Gill Lawson will be hosting the annual event. Bring your own booze and bangers and we'll provide the salads

Doors open 7.30 for 8pm start

Room L3

The Leverhulme Centre
Reaseheath College
Nantwich
Cheshire CW5 6DF



The Cheshire Smallholders' Association Newsletter Issue 1,2007

Chair's report

Outgoing chair Tony Moore looks back over his second year in office (2005–2006)

We organised a wide range of lectures, training and visits during the year. October's AGM was followed by a very enjoyable and informative presentation from John Mycock and Ian Jones of the 'Mid Cheshire Barn Owl Conservation Group'.

November saw a talk from Brian Montague of the State Veterinary Service with his views on Avian Flu, while January heralded the return of John Yarwood in his 'Ask the Vet' role, an ever popular session, which we have arranged to repeat in this coming season.

February's talk was given by Lee Rawlinson from the Environment Agency. March's poultry lecture was from Jonathon Spibey. The season ended with a talk on Organic Farming from John Walton of Stockley Farm, on the Arley Estate.

Non-lecture events included a visit to the Cheese Factory of Joseph Heler near Nantwich, rounded off by pub lunch – thanks to Jane for organising a good morning out. The May evening visit to Home Farm at Tatton Park was most enjoyable; thanks once again to Jayne Hulse for organising that.

Gill Lawson organised an evening guided walk led by FWAG, which was well attended and enjoyed. The Barbeque at Gill Lawson's in June saw some new faces, the weather was fairly kind to us, and an enjoyable 'chin wag' session was had by all.

We did not manage to have our usual stand at the Reaseheath College Open Day in May, due to a lack of provision of suitable covered premises. We hope that Reaseheath will be able to provide suitable accommodation for us next year. The stand at the Arley Country Fair did not come about either, since the Fair was cancelled due to the ground conditions following torrential rain in April.

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FWAG and the Cholmondeley Farm Network

Double helpings at lecture on Mon 26 February



Tom Jackson from Cheshire FWAG will be providing our main lecture for the evening. Having recognised the role played by many UK smallholders in maintaining environmental diversity through sustainable farming, Tom will talk about how FWAG can help us to access grants and other forms of funding.

For more information
visit: www.fwag.org.uk
email: cheshire@fwag.org.uk
tel: 01270 627 938



Also speaking at the meeting will be Annette McDonald, who has been working hard on setting up a local farming-customer supply network centred around the Cholmondeley Estate.

The network is now getting established and CSA members are invited to get involved. With the emphasis increasingly on low food miles and quality food from named, extensive sources, it could just prove a useful outlet for surplus home produced and, in some cases, rare breeds meat.

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Animal transport rules address welfare issues

New regulations on the protection of animals during transport came into force across Europe in January. Here, Janet Todhunter looks at the implications for smallholders.

I spent many weeks during the autumn travelling around the country attending as many sales as I could. The quality of the stock varied at the different venues, as did the prices.

Several of the sales were Breed Society sales and many had rare and native breeds of all species being sold. The presentation of the animals also varied, some washed and polished to perfection whilst others had obviously just been dragged from the field.

One consistency at all the sales that absolutely appalled me was the handling of the animals! I watched sheep being dragged by fleece and horns, pigs being pushed and pulled by their ears and tails, cattle violently beaten with sticks and then many pushed, pulled, and even tipped upside down into trailers or backs of vehicles that were completely illegal.

Listening to these same people, several who had paid substantial sums for the animals, further disgusted me as they claimed to be rearing naturally and not keeping them in 'factory' style conditions.

There are lots of rules and regulations regarding welfare of animals, in markets, on farms and during transport, these cannot be ignored just because they are rare breeds and furthermore keepers of the same rare breeds cannot claim ignorance of the law because it is a hobby.



The new regulation states that:

'No animal shall be transported unless it is fit for the intended journey, and all animals shall be transported in conditions guaranteed not to cause them injury or unnecessary suffering.'

Timetable 5th January 2007

Transporters carrying out journeys over 65km and under 8 hours must be authorised by the competent authority.

Journeys of over 8 hours must be authorised and have their vehicles inspected.

An unfit animal will be more tightly defined.

5th January 2008

Drivers and attendants transporting farmed animals, horses and poultry on journeys of over 65km and less than 8 hours will require a certificate of competence.

1st January 2009

All vehicles used for transport of horses or farmed animals on journeys of over 8 hours will have to be equipped with a satellite navigation system.

There are several derogations, one of which is transporting for 'economic gain'.

For the majority of rare breed keepers, whether it is a hobby or business it is advisable to apply for authorisation, there may be one occasion when you travel over 65km or transport your animals for economic gain. Application is not difficult; it is just your name and address. You are advised to keep a copy of the application form because there may be a delay in issuing your authorisation.

The competence training will be announced at a later date!

I personally think that the new rules are far too lenient.

Most registered keepers of animals will receive a booklet from Defra.

For more information

visit: www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/welfare

tel: 0845 603 8395 (Helpline)

CSA SHOW TIME 2006 SHOWED MIXED RESULTS

The planned presence of the Cheshire Smallholders Association at events last summer was a bit of a mixed bag.

The first disappointment was our withdrawal from the Reaseheath Open day in May, due to the lack of provision of covered accommodation for us. The previous venues which we have used were not available, the Dutch Barn having been demolished and the grain Store now being used for the Construction Dept., and hence full of joinery and bricklaying materials.

The allocation to us of a space in a car park was felt to be inadequate and unworkable, particularly in view of the rainy weather we were having at that time, and so we withdrew from the event.

The second disappointment was the cancellation of the Arley Country Fair at the end of May, due to the state of the ground following all the heavy rain. We were to have had a stand in the Cheshire Support Group of the Rare Breeds Survival Trust marquee for the Saturday and Sunday of the Bank Holiday weekend, for which we had a small team of volunteers to man.

However, the third opportunity did materialise, and thanks to the RBST Cheshire Support Group we had a stand at the Cheshire Show. The group also kindly provided us with a 2 section notice board, on which we mounted A4 photos from some of our recent courses. The stand was strategically placed between the RBST merchandising table, and the North Ronaldsay ewe with her two lambs. Sales were manned by our President, Arthur Green, and CSA



Life Members Avis and John Shaw, with their supporters. Our stand attracted many visitors; 2 new memberships were taken, and we hope that many of the dozen or so serious enquiries will also lead to new memberships. Many people took newsletters and leaflets, and the stickers prove to be popular with the children, as did the presence of my Jack Russell terrier.

Manning the stand proved to be a problem, with a lack of volunteers. Many thanks to John Shaw who kept an eye on things while I was busy showing, and signed up one of the new members while doing his 'day job'.

We hope to repeat the experience next year, as it is important to get across to the public that we exist, and to attract new members each year; but we need a team of people to man the stand, both at this and the other events, to take best advantage of the opportunity – we cannot continue to rely on a small handful of people to sustain the Association.

Tony Moore

REASEHEATH FESTIVAL AND OPEN DAY Saturday May 13 2007, 11am–5pm

We're looking for volunteers to man our stand on the day for an hour or two. It's a great place to bring the whole family for a day out!

Dog show and agility display • riding displays • demonstrations • music
miniature train rides • BBQ/ices • entertainers • bouncy castle • archery



Training update

The **Dairy products** course ran on 25th November. Reports from those who attended were enthusiastic.

Lamb butchery is currently being organised by Mike and Maggie Taylor. Mike has also kindly offered to provide training for **Lambing**, which is happening now at Arley Farm. If your name was not on the list and you are interested please let Mike know on 01925 263184.

Nicki Town has kindly offered to run a **Soap making** course in early summer. There is a limit of 6 places on this, so if you would like to attend let me know soon.

Traditional pig keeping is also expected to run in May.

Tractor driving and **Welding** have both proved to be too expensive for a CSA course, but if you are still keen Reaseheath College run public courses for both (www.reaseheath.ac.uk).

If you are interested in any of the courses listed in The Gate, please fill in the form and send it to me.



We welcome suggestions for courses, and any leads for tutors and suitable venues. The CSA also recommends courses run by the local agricultural and FE colleges as these can often represent excellent value for money.

Beth Jones

TRAINING EVENT APPLICATION FORM

Name	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>
Evening tel no	<input type="text"/>
Course(s) of interest	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>

Return to: Beth Jones • The Woodlands • Whitchurch Road • Burleydam • Whitchurch • Shropshire SY13 4AX
tel: 01948 871641 • email: e.a.jones@staffs.ac.uk

Course list

Alpacca keeping

A course to address the practical aspects of buying, rearing, clipping and breeding

Bed & Breakfast

A guide to opening your home to paying guests covering the practicalities and legalities plus promotion of your business

Beekeeping

An introduction to all things apian: from choosing the hive to harvesting the honey

Chainsaw use and safety

The essential introduction to safe chainsaw handling at reasonable cost

Dairy products

An introduction to making the most of your excess milk production including soft cheese, yoghurt, ice-cream and butter production

Goatkeeping and management

Everything you need to know about buying, keeping and breeding goats, including handling and milking

Hurdlemaking

Beautiful and functional, traditional hazel hurdlemaking from scratch for smallholding or garden

Introduction to poultry

Practical advice on breeds and systems for your own egg and table poultry production

Lamb butchery

Turn your carcase into professionally presented joints with this hands-on introduction

Lambing

Lambing skills and techniques for beginners and more experienced sheep owners

Lambskins for clothing

Turning your skins into functional and funky clothing

Organic smallholding

Practical introduction to maximise return from your land in harmony with the environment

Sheep shearing

Top to tail techniques for a clean sheep shave!



Sheep tasks

Everything and more you wanted to know about the practicalities of keeping sheep

Showing cattle

A practical introduction in the art of preparing stock for the show ring

Showing sheep

A practical introduction in the art of preparing stock for the show ring

Soap making

Turn oils and fats into deliciously fragranced designer soaps using traditional techniques

Traditional pig keeping

All you need to know about buying, keeping and breeding pigs including rearing your first weaners

Chair's report continued from page 1

We did manage to have a stand at the Cheshire Show, thanks to the Cheshire Support Group of the RBST, who provided space in their Marquee, and lent us 2 display boards. The same boards were made available to us at the Rare Breeds Sale at Chelford in September. Many thanks to the people who spent time manning the stand, talking to interested passers by, and recruiting new members. Thanks also to the RBST Cheshire Support Group for sharing space with us.

We have been collecting for the charity "Send a Cow" during the year, starting with a Christmas Raffle, and following on with proceeds from the trading table. We raised £200, and a certificate of appreciation has been received. Thanks to all who organised and donated towards that. We hope to continue this support through the new season.

I would like to thank all the committee for the support and time that they give, especially the office holders. Anyone who feels that they could spend a little time helping with the organising would be very welcome to join us.

I have enjoyed my spell as chair, it has been a privilege and I hope that my successor, Kevin Holmes will also enjoy his tenure of the office.

Tony Moore

CSA CHARITY 2007

Send a Cow is a Christian charity that enables poor farmers in Africa to become self-reliant by providing them with livestock, training and advice. They work with some of the most vulnerable groups in Africa, including children orphaned by war, families affected by AIDS, and disabled people.

Send a Cow



Livestock for Life

Membership subs

Membership numbers are at an all time low for recent years. We're sure this is an oversight in stumping up the subs on the part of many so we're enclosing a Standing order form with this newsletter which can be used to set up an annual payment instruction.

We must also all know people with smallholding interests who are not yet members of the CSA. New members bring a new energy to the association so perhaps we should all resolve to join up at least one this year.

Failure to renew membership will mean this is the last newsletter you'll receive.

MEMBER'S SALES AND WANTED ADVERTS

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Ad placement is free for members

email: stella@thistlestop.fsnet.co.uk
tel: Stella 01948 710302

Ryton Organic Garden excursion, Sat 9 June

Garden Organic is the working name of the Henry Doubleday Research Association (HDRA). A registered charity, and Europe's largest organic membership organisation, they are dedicated to researching and promoting organic gardening, farming and food.

The CSA last visited the garden 10 years ago so we thought it about time we planned another trip.

We have arranged a tour of the gardens for the after-noon at a cost of £5.50/head. This includes the cost of admission and the guided tour which last about an hour and a half.

If there are enough people interested, we may organise a coach from Reasheath but otherwise people can travel in their own cars and meet up at the gardens. There is an excellent restaurant and coffee shop with the wonderful gift shop

Members are very welcome to bring guests but we need to know total numbers by 9th May.



contact: Jane Hulse to book your place.
tel: 01829 781343 (after 6.pm)
email: Jane.Hulse@i7services.co.uk or Jane.Hulse@Cheshire.gov.uk

For more information visit:
www.gardenorganic.org.uk/gardens/ryton.php

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