

MGA TIMES

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EVENTS

Beef 2001

MGA will be exhibiting at this event, which takes place on Friday 14th September at the RAC, Cirencester. Our stand will promote the maize beef work which we have contributed to. Keith Blenkiron (MGA member, beef farmer & previous Silage Competition winner) will be on the stand to talk to visitors about his experiences etc.

Dairy Event

We will have a stand at the one day Dairy Event on Wednesday 19th September at the NAC. Ruth Baker, Chris Savery & other MGA representatives will be present & we hope members will stop off for a chat. We have yet to receive notification of our stand location but will include this in the next MGA Times.

MGA/BGS Meeting

This important meeting will take place in Ardingly, Sussex on Wednesday 24th October. Full details will be included in the next mailing.

Silage Competition postponed

The MGA National Milk & Meat from Maize Silage Competition will not be run this year in view of the F & M risks associated with judging farm to farm. We are hoping to return to the competition next year.

MGA HARVEST WORKSHOPS

Come to the MGA Harvest Workshops to help you assess when your maize crop will be ready - *your invitation is enclosed*

As you know, in the light of Foot and Mouth, we did not run any of our demonstration trials this year and therefore have had no demonstration site meetings. However, at a recent internal meeting it was decided by MGA Council & our R & D Committee that we would run a series of Maize Harvest Workshops.

The Workshops are being held during September & hosted by 4 MGA members in Sussex, Gloucester, Devon & Cheshire. The sites have been specially selected away from any livestock and Foot & Mouth precautions will be in place. Please see the enclosed invite for full details.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Diary from the Chairman's farm ...

The much needed rain I was asking for eventually came & just in time to save our maize from any yield reduction due to drought stress. This was just beginning to show up on those very hot days we had earlier on & so now, with moist soils & plenty of sun, the crops look excellent & full of promise.

Grass growth picked up & we did cut a small area of 2nd cut to boost grass silage stocks, which will be very useful as we run towards the end of winter.

As I write this (9th August) it is absolutely belting down which is most unusual for this area at this time of year - but will help to keep grass covers at a good level.

Practically all the winter barley & winter OSR in the immediate area has been cut & the combines have been nibbling at the early wheats but no real progress has been made due to showery weather.

We buy somewhere in the region of 300 acres worth of straw from our arable neighbours, buying it in the swath, I arrange for it to be baled by contractors & we haul it home. Barley straw yields have been very variable ranging from

0.75 to 1.75 tonnes per acre.

We have been watching the price of quota closely of late as we need to purchase some as our annual milk production increases. We currently own quota for about 70% of our production which is OK when quota isn't an issue but can make a serious hole in profit when it is, so we are looking to buy a chunk at some stage to reduce this gap. With the recent price rise I feared we may have tried to be too greedy & missed the boat, but following the July production figures I feel more comfortable to sit tight for the time being & just watch the market. Time will tell if we have made the right decision.

David Christensen

ROTARY BAND SYSTEM

Visit to Switzerland?

Charles Moore, Environment Committee Chairman, is keen to visit Switzerland again shortly to view the drilling technique which aims to reduce both the environmental risks & costs of establishing maize (full details of the drill are in the 2001 MGA conference report). If you are interested in going to Switzerland

please contact the office & Charles
will organise a trip.