

Wet, Wet, Wet, and I'm not referring to the pop group. That's how it's been since last September, and I guess you don't need me to remind you of that. I cannot remember a prolonged period of wet for so long. I can remember having two tractors to pull a trailer over the field in September, but by mid-October everything was back to normal.

Land recovery is going to be very difficult and land which has been flooded for a long period probably will not be seeded this year. People who are not connected to farming have commented to me that the fields which have been drilled look very green, and they are quite right, but look a bit closer and you will see there is very little root and without some drier and warmer weather the root system will not be able to sustain the plant.

'Brexit' has happened, but the markets have not been established, so we carry on and watch this space, having planted a crop without knowing whether there will be a tariff to pay, depending where we find a customer. I always thought it would be a messy process.

Moving away from speculating about the future, the pig prices have been quite good mainly due to the pig disease in China, so that has boosted our market.

With the coronavirus affecting the whole world, people still have to eat, so hopefully we can still export our meats. Wheat and barley prices are stable with a small profit margin if the farmers have been careful with the spray programme. There are still several hectares of potatoes in the ground, especially in Lincolnshire. There is still sugar beet in the field near to where I live. The factories at Bury and Cantley are closed, Wissington is staying open until March 30th, but there will not be a haulage contribution from British Sugar.

At a time like this I think of God's promise that 'seed time and harvest will not cease'. Some of the farmers might question that, but from experience there has always been a seed time and a harvest. There are difficulties along the way, which have been prominent these last six months.

Just as with our faith, we were not promised an easy road. We have had the Budget and will have to wait to establish the outcome when it has been through the parliament process. At the time of writing the country is waiting to see if we have lock - down on movement and whatever else might be added on. It is a very worrying time for the elderly especially with the prospect of self-isolation for a number of weeks. This will certainly test the support organisations who would normally be on hand. It is a new era which we will all have to adjust to. Anyone my age has seen it before and rose to the challenge, so I am confident we can do it again.

Keep praying for each other.

George W Frost
District Agricultural Chaplain