

Report to Countryside Management Team. November 2019.

A wonderful harvest, with above average returns on most crops and then the sugar beet is also returning good weight and sugar content. What could be better!! As we know it was very dry during September and into early October and then it started to rain, and it's rained almost constantly ever since.

Changing a crop which had been decided before harvest is very difficult, getting alternative seed, and what do you do with what has been bought in the hope of planting. In my day of farming it was very difficult as the seed had a dressing, but now things have changed when that is not allowed, so it could be slightly easier, if you can ignore the price difference between specialist seed and feed.

I usually give a price comparison of cereals and I don't wish to worry anybody, but feed wheat, which was £180.00 per tonne last year is £145 for November and feed barley which £160 per tonne last year is £118 at present. If you are a milk producer the price is 4p litre lower than last year. Pigs are about the same, but are on the edge with today's prices although slightly higher than last year. Lamb prices are about the same as last year at present, but were a 1/3 higher in March / April. Just received the Farmers Weekly magazine and the price of wheat has risen by £4.00 a tonne and Barley by £3.50 a tonne, because of the flooding in Yorkshire and the Midlands.

As it's so wet now brings into question once again why the hedges cannot be cut in August, when conditions were much dryer. Those in city offices obviously know best!! My hedges need cutting but even grassland is too wet to contemplate running large machines on. There's only a few weeks before restrictions come into play once again.

I will update any information I think need to be stated at the meeting.

George W Frost. Agricultural Chaplain.