



Hello and Welcome to the Summer Newsletter from Crouchley

We thought it was best to hold off writing this until we were sure that summer had really, REALLY arrived after the long cold spring. So now that the barbecue is firmly back out there, the brass bands are playing in the parks and Mr Murray has made history at Wimbledon we think that summer is officially here - so on with our news from the farm.

Crouchley Hall Farm July 2013



KellyBronze Turkeys

Even though Christmas is still a way away, we've been preparing for our 2013 season for quite a while now. Because our birds are properly reared to maturity, this year's poults are hatched already and will be coming to us from the Kelly family's hatchery in the next week. By then they'll be ready to live outdoors and will really benefit from being out in the field.



So now we're busy getting their shelter ready, BUT we've moved it up the hill and away from the area that flooded so spectacularly last year. Not that we're expecting that sort of weather again but this IS the U.K. so let's Be Prepared !

We're anticipating a nice straightforward rearing season looking after little birds growing into big tasty ones and of course we'll be taking order for them from the 1st October onwards.

Jumping forwards a little, we'll be at the [North West Food Lovers Festival](#) on the 18th, 19th & 20th October at Event City next door to the Trafford Centre, cooking some birds, hopefully taking some orders and definitely meeting as many people as possible. If you're visiting the Festival please come and say Hello !

And finally the Big Finish to our turkey year will be the **Sales Days**, here at Crouchley on the **23rd and 24th December**. We're looking forward to seeing you then for mince pies and a little something warming as well, while you collect your bird.

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Sheep

Our Wiltshire Horns came through the winter in good shape really, although it was a long one and we had more sheep than usual to keep following last year's wet summer and poor grazing, so the hay bill was HUGE ! Best not think about it.



Lambing time was as rewarding as ever, if colder than we would have liked with the water buckets even inside the lambing shed freezing up overnight. But we're not complaining as we ended up with a nice lot of lambs who are really doing well, particularly now that we're having some proper summer weather.

Lambs are like most young things and grow best when they're able to alternate between eating well and then sleeping comfortably in the sunshine. If they could just cooperate by not constantly blundering through the electric fence to eat the grass that's always greener, it would be really helpful !

Keep in touch

If you would like to see what's going on here on a more regular basis, you could always join us on [Facebook](#) or follow us on [twitter](#). There always seems to be something happening that relieves the boredom or raises a smile.



Pigs and the rest !

We held off getting this year's weaners (piglets just weaned off the sow's milk) until we were sure that the cold weather was over. It's much better for outdoor pigs to have the sun on their backs, rather than for them to be spending most of the day indoors, trying to keep dry and warm.

So now we have 3 delightful Saddlebacks down the field. They're still in a small run around their pig ark, as they're small enough to slide under the electric fence but not sensible enough to know to come to me when called. They'll get the hang of it soon !

Our hens have reached a low ebb at the moment following a visit from Mr Fox, who raided both our, and a neighbour's, hen run in the same week. The survivors are sulking in the poultry version of Fort Knox until it's safe for them to go back into the orchard.

We also seem to be having some unplanned bee "issues" this summer - first time ever. The dogs regretted the second swarm but some antihistamine butties soon put them right. Just have to evict the latest arrivals from the garden shed !

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