

## Farming Matters June 2017

### On the farm

Following on from my last report in January, the countryside has experienced several changes with the dry Spring followed by the very dry time in April and the thankful rain in mid-May which helped all crops and plants.

This Spring we have sown the following crops, including Spring Fava Beans, Naked Oats, Spring Barley, and Vining peas.

I have heard the cuckoo more this year than for several years and we have a pair of House Martin nesting on the South side of the house, as well as on the North side. First time I have ever seen it in 50+ years living here.

Recently we have been busy spraying all the various crops with fungicides to prevent disease and herbicides to control the weeds (wildflowers in the wrong place).

Over the May Bank Holiday, we were very busy sowing our vining peas. These have to be drilled on the precise day so that the harvester can harvest concurrently, otherwise the peas will be too big and will not taste sweet!

James sowed the seeds on the first of three fields on the Saturday afternoon, then sowed the other two fields on the Sunday, while I followed behind with the roller to push in the stones and crack the clods. In the meantime, James changed from the drill to the sprayer to apply the herbicide which is applied to the freshly rolled land to form a layer of pesticide so that when the weeds germinate they will die when they reach the layer of chemical on the surface.

The Oilseed rape has now finished flowering there we make a note in the diary so that we know that in 6 weeks' time we will apply the Glyphosate to encourage the crop to ripen so that we should be harvesting two weeks after applying it.

Two weeks ago, we had a visit from Phoenix St Peter School from Lowestoft when we showed them the different seeds and crops and they had a chance to sit on the tractors and combine. We have another two classes coming in June to do the similar things and hopefully they will have a farm walk to see the fields and hedges.

In June, we also have the Harleston Young Farmers coming around for the evening to see the crops and machinery.

On June 11<sup>th</sup>, there is the Open Farm Sunday where anyone can visit a farm <https://farmsunday.org/> (Free of charge), have a trailer ride and look at the animals.

Summer is here therefore enjoy the countryside.

By the time it is for the next report we will have completed harvesting all our crops which will be safely in the dry.



