



## The Standard



WELCOME TO OUR WINTER EDITION OF THE STANDARD. AND TO MEADOW QUALITY'S NEW HOME!



*The Old Wheat Store silhouetted against the winter evening sky.*

Meadow Quality relocated to The Old Wheat Store, Newhouse Farm, Edstone, at the end of October.

Our new offices are just a mile away from the Bearley site and we are delighted to have found such a suitable building so close, and by retaining the same telephone exchange, all contact numbers remain unchanged. In addition, our new premises provide us with a much improved workable office space – those of you who visited us at Bearley Mill will appreciate that the layout of our previous office was not ideal.

The move represents an exciting and positive development for Meadow Quality, providing us with both the additional scope and security that we

need for the future, as well as much-improved work space for our dedicated staff in Warwickshire. We look forward to continuing to work with you from our new base.



*The Directors of Meadow Quality at the first Board Meeting in the new offices, with Phil Barker and Colin Fenwick, Agri Managers for Lloyds TSB (far right) checking out their 'investment' at The Old Wheat Store!*

## CUSTOMER SURVEY – THE RESULTS!

Back in late spring, we commissioned EFPF to survey a cross section of our livestock suppliers who have marketed stock through Meadow Quality, to assist us with future business development planning and ensure our services meet your needs and expectations. And where we could improve!

### WHAT YOU SAID:-

#### Pig Producers

- 90% of you rated Meadow Quality as important to your business, but only 70% rated our service as excellent (some scope to improve!)
- 100% of you thought financial security was "important or very important".
- Just over two thirds believe that a better price is very important.
- There was strong support for Meadow Quality to investigate group buying opportunities in animal health products, requisites and in energy.
- Development of new markets was the most important future need identified

#### Beef and Sheep Producers

- 81% of you rated Meadow Quality as "important to the success of your business" in the beef sector, but only 56% in the lamb sector.
- 92% rated our beef stock selection service as very satisfactory or excellent – and we scored a healthy 89% for lambs.
- You considered that financial security was "important or very important", rated by 87% of you.
- There was less support for "group buying" in these sectors, but again, Vet/med/variable inputs were highest on the agenda.
- Service standards generally scored very highly, with 100% rating it satisfactory or excellent. However, there is scope to improve the speed of carcase payment information being returned.
- Looking forward – developing new markets and assistance in reducing producers' costs scored highly, as did the development of stronger supply chain linkages

Now we would like to extend the survey to all customers. It couldn't be easier to have your say! If you have access to the internet, go to [www.effp.com](http://www.effp.com) and follow the links on EFPF home page to the Meadow Quality survey, choosing between the pig survey and the beef and lamb survey. Links are also available on the MQ website. All your information will remain confidential to EFPF and will not be divulged to any other party and MQ receives only "aggregated data" from the survey. Ten replies will be selected at random and will receive a quality bottle of seasonal cheer by way of a thank you!

### Words without actions are just words!

Since reviewing these results, we have commenced a number of key initiatives to address areas where our service can be further improved and I hope as many of you as possible will support these. ERFs and D&H are now providing a discounted range of farm requisites, wormers, etc. for you, our producers. We have just finalised group buying arrangements for feeds for our calf rearers and the MQ milk powder continues to offer excellent value for money. Market development is an on-going priority and it is always satisfying when producers pass on leads for us to develop for you.

**Greg Mowbray – Managing Director**

## T SHARE UPDATE

I am pleased to be able to report that, as a result of the shareholders' meetings held in July, the Board's proposals to create a new class of share for trading members – T shares – were approved. The existing A Shares of all those shareholders who have traded with Meadow Quality in the past two years have now been converted to T Shares and new share certificates are being issued. This means that the structure of the Company has reverted to the intentions of its founders – it is a business effectively owned by the farmers who trade with it. It is the Board's plan that we should build on this concept.

**Ian Smith – Chairman**

**WISHING YOU ALL A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR**

# MILK POWDER SALES

## Great Value for Money!

Meadow Quality has been supplying milk powder to its rearers for just over two years. It has been a slow, but progressive transition, so we could ensure that they had a quality product at the keenest value. Now we are satisfied with the quality and the cost of the "Meadow Quality rearing powder", we can confidently roll out the benefits to all of our members. You can now purchase the milk-powder in two ways:

1. Order a minimum of one tonne, delivered direct to your farm, saving over £2/ bag.
2. Collect small or medium amounts from one of our calf collection centres, at Ash, or Chippenham.

The powder is a whey based product which lends itself particularly well to rearing calves for enhanced skeletal growth. It also helps to prevent

scouring due to its whey based properties. The powder is best suited to the following systems:

- Rearing replacement heifer calves
- Rearing of calves for store production
- Rearing of calves to take through to finish

Systems this powder is NOT suited to are:

- The production of baby calves for sale at 3 to 4 weeks of age
- Veal systems

The current price is:

£31/bag ex collection centre

£29/bag for 1 to 1 ½ tonne delivered direct to your farm

**Contact your fieldsman for further details!**

## BUY FROM ONE CENTRE, BUY INTO KNOWLEDGE FROM ALL THREE!



The team at Ash – from left to right  
Margaret Reade, Robin Bebb, Jane Butler,  
Clive Mahony and Julian Dale

### NORTHERN CALF CENTRE - ASH, near Whitchurch, Shropshire

Welcome to the Northern Calf Centre (more commonly referred to as Ash) which has been managed by **Julian Dale** for over 5 years. Julian has spent his whole life marketing calves and is renowned for his calf drawing ability. His team has a lot of depth and knowledge - **Robin Bebb** is a grass roots man who brings a wealth of knowledge around livestock husbandry and a sound understanding of animal welfare. **John Williams** has a long history in the calf world, including rearing and feeding of calves. **Clive Mahony** is one of the more senior members in the team (the MQ hairline gives it away!) His strength is the knowledge of how to grow and manage an animal to best suit its intended market. **Jane Butler** manages the administration and payments of the calves through Ash and her attention to detail and ability to resolve an issue is impeccable. **Margaret Reade** joins her on a calf day to help process passports. As a farmer's wife, she is very highly qualified and has a good understanding of the industry. We will be shortly investing in some new handling and penning facilities in Ash to enable us to also market your cull cows and store cattle, in addition to reared calves and baby calves, all from the one site.

**We don't just buy and sell calves; we transfer our knowledge with them!**  
Contact Ash on 01948 666905



The team at Carmarthen – Vicki Bull and Adrian Bowen

### WELSH CALF CENTRE at Carmarthen, South Wales

This collection centre is the youngest of the three, both in terms of the personnel and the calf centre itself. **Adrian Bowen** has been running our Welsh Calf Centre since it opened in January 2009 and, with good producer support, has been able to grow the business throughout the year. He is looking forward to growing it further in 2010 as more and more producers come to appreciate the consistent pricing and swift unloading facility the centre offers. Adrian has plans to also use the centre to facilitate the collection of finished cattle and cull cows on a fortnightly basis, enabling our members to reduce their haulage costs and reduce stress on their cattle. **Vicki Bull** works alongside Adrian, selling calves to her customers in the Monmouth and Gwent area and handling the paperwork on the calf collection day. Agent **Darren Haywood** covers the south eastern area of Wales and his main role is to service dairy customers who have calves to sell, from Cardiff to Carmarthen.

**If you are interested in buying or selling quality rearing calves or best quality calves, please give Adrian a call, he will be delighted to help – contact him on 07736 056712**



The team at Chippenham – from left to right  
Tim Roberts, Dale Buckingham, Jo Morley,  
Helen Ritchens and Nick Hill

### SOUTHERN CALF CENTRE at Chippenham, Wiltshire

Battens Farm is our flagship centre; this unit can handle baby calves, reared calves, store cattle, cull and finished cattle. It is based at Allington, Chippenham and due to its central location, we can collect livestock from the Midlands to the South coast and from Kent to Devon without causing stress or fatigue to the stock. We have an experienced team working in Chippenham, which is now managed by **Dale Buckingham**. Dale himself has over 20 years experience marketing both baby and reared calves. **Nick Hill** manages our Superior Sires scheme and the health and welfare of the livestock in our centre. He has an outstanding eye for stock which can be seen in his own pedigree Limousin herd (The Quaish herd). **Tim Roberts** is our most recent recruit to the Southern Calf Team. Tim also has his own pedigree herd of red cattle, although his are "Salers". His passion for cattle and his knowledge of breeding, growing and finishing cattle makes him a valuable member of the team! **Jo Morley** and **Helen Ritchens** form the admin side of the team. Jo is the longest serving member of staff at Chippenham and manages the day-to-day running of the office, Southern calf payments and the administrative function of the Superior Sires Scheme. Helen, a farmer's daughter, co-ordinates all haulage requirements for baby calves in and out of the centre. She also deals with all BCMS movements and enquiries. Both Helen and Jo have been known to appreciate the odd chocolate biscuit to help them through a busy calf day!

**If it has four legs and is healthy, we can market it quickly and effectively, just give us a call – 01249 783324.**

## A WARM WELCOME TO DAN DAY

It was inevitable that one of the UK's pig business best known personalities wouldn't be off the radar for long! Dan Day, who definitely fits the bill as one of the industry's larger than life characters, in every sense, returned to the "muddy side of the fence" from 1<sup>st</sup> September, when he joined us as a Pig Marketing Specialist. Dan says "I see Meadow Quality as a resurgent force in the pig marketing business; the company has an excellent reputation for integrity, a strong financial base and its excellent weekly market reports demonstrate a clear objective of adding value and transparency for producers. Having spent 4 years with Grampian, I firmly believe that the experience and knowledge of how a modern, professionally run processing business operates, will be hugely beneficial in working with forward-looking pig farming businesses, who genuinely want to develop a mutually sustainable British pig meat supply chain. And whilst MQ values working with the UK's pig-meat processing sector, it also understands the need for producers to have a strong, collective voice to stand up against some of the excessive demands of the multiple retail sector!"  
You can contact **Dan Day** on **07736 056713**

## EAST RIDING FARM SERVICES

In July 2009, MD Greg Mowbray, along with Mary Cresswell and Simon Davies, visited East Riding Farm Services, Kelleythorpe, Driffield, East Yorkshire, to see an extremely impressive building that ERFs moved into three years ago. The combined unit comprises offices and a large warehouse, enabling ERFs to supply a wide range of animal health products and requisites for farming businesses, from shower gel to shovels! ERFs has an extremely friendly and committed team, who will action your requirements and despatch nationally to be direct on farm, within 24 hours of an order being placed. They are a preferred supplier for our members and in addition to offering very competitive group prices, will also have special monthly offers, unique to MQ producers.

**Order direct to ERFs on 01377 249249**



## OUTDOOR PIGS

Meadow Quality has been engaged to help a leading pig producer find suitable land to rent for outdoor pigs. The land needs to be free-draining and ideally 80-100 acres available per year. Pigs can add value to light land and in many cases have become a valued part of the farm cropping rotation.

A contract farming business opportunity also exists for an outdoor pig breeding unit. Our client will supply the pigs, feeds, veterinarian input and logistics. You are to supply the pig accommodation, machinery, labour and expertise. We are currently sourcing suitable land in the East Midlands area. This is an excellent opportunity to work within a leading supply chain, with secure partners.

If you are interested, in the first instance please contact; **Simon Davies**, who is acting on behalf of our client, on **07711 878947** or [simon.davies@meadowq.co.uk](mailto:simon.davies@meadowq.co.uk)

## A SUCCESSFUL LEAF EVENT

Bedfordia Farms Limited, Milton Ernest, Bedfordshire, hosted an Open Farm on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June. I was pleased to join Richard Smith and his pig team to help communicate to the general public how the pig farming industry works, stressing that local should always be better. The day started with a briefing by John Ibbett, Bedfordia's Chief Executive, to all the team who were involved in the day, ensuring the smooth running of the event! At this point however, the heavens opened with a torrential downpour! Undeterred, the team pushed on and fortunately the rain stopped and eventually the sun came out! Around 1,050 visitors came along and enjoyed this public awareness event.



The hog roast at Bedfordia's Open Farm Day

The original business started in 1939, with a 40 hectare farm at Milton Ernest. Today, it farms 2,200 hectares. Within the business there is a 1,000 sow commercial unit with a further 100 sows for in-house multiplication on the closed breeding unit. They produce approx 23,000 finished pigs per year, which are contracted through Meadow Quality. The growing pigs are finished on a unit holding 4,800 pigs from 35-105 kgs on a computer fed wet feed system, with natural ventilation. All the slurry is pumped through to Biogen Greenfinch's anaerobic digestion plant, where it is combined with food-chain waste to produce renewal energy and bio-fertiliser.

Some of the attractions put on by the hosts included - an opportunity to meet the piglets and their mum, a farm walk through some of Bedfordia's 5,500 acres of wheat, barley and oil seed rape, static machinery and a grain tipping display, education material, tractor and trailer rides, hog roast and BBQ, a popular and busy home made cake stall, an observation bee hive with locally produced honey for sale, face painting and award winning bacon from Bedfordia's pigs.

Over £2,000 was raised from the sale of the hog roast and cakes, which was shared amongst local charities, Farm Crisis Network and Care for the Family. A great day was enjoyed by all!

**Simon Davies, Pig Marketing Specialist – 07711 878947**

## D&H ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

D&H have also been selected to provide you with a cost and time efficient method of ensuring that you have the required products to hand when you need them. Any order placed before 2.30pm, will be delivered the next day. D&H, similar to ERFs, are again, a family owned concern, ensuring the highest level of service and commitment. Established over 25 years ago, the business has been built on understanding and fulfilling busy livestock producers' needs. From acid cleaning crystals to yard brooms, and most things in between! With an efficient 24 hour ordering to delivery process, a simple monthly statement\* and competitive group buying rates, all MQ beef, sheep and dairy customers should benefit.

\*Monthly payment via account contra or direct debit only

**Introductory offer! Spend £50 or more on your first order and receive a bottle of fine wine! FREE!**

**For an extensive product catalogue, or to place an order, please call Sales Freephone on 0800 056 55 66**

## CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME!



Judy

Meadow Quality employees Mary Cresswell and Judy Underwood took part in this year's Race For Life to raise money for **Cancer Research UK**

Both Mary and Judy completed the 5km course, with Mary running at Arrow Valley Park in Redditch and Judy running at Cheltenham Race Course.

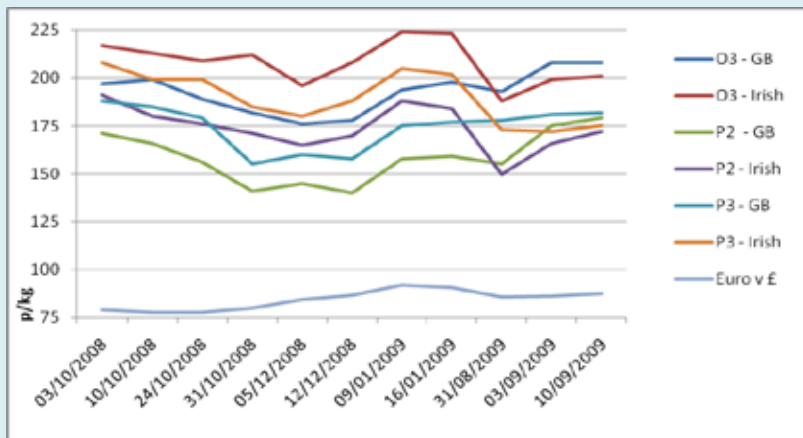
Mary



# TIMING SALES FOR BARREN COWS?



**Stuart Vile – 07802 379126**



## What do these figures show?

It's that time of year when beef farmers, after weaning calves off beef cows, or dairy farmers are considering whether to risk milking that cow through the winter again. One needs to consider what to do with the **BARREN COW?** We have put some figures together showing last year's price trends, euro values and the Irish market equivalent for cows.

By improving the finish from a 2 to 3 fat level, the graph on the right opposite shows you can earn an **EXTRA £35-55 per cow** depending on the carcass weight. Improvement in fatness levels is affected by feed quality (i.e. silage analysis is important) and the age of the cow.

Lean cows did not improve in the run up to Christmas; the biggest price increase is for cows sold in early January.

## Summary

If lean cows will not improve, then sell them as swiftly as possible.

If you can improve its condition from a 2 to 3 fatness level, there are more abattoirs that are willing to buy the better finished cow.

# KNOWING THE TRUE VALUE OF YOUR STOCK



**Clive Mahony – 07703 563782**

In my career with Meadow Quality, the question I am most commonly asked, particularly by new producers, is "How much are you paying?"

I believe the only accurate measure of the true value the animals are returning to you, is the pence per kilogram live weight (weighed at home before loading) actually banked. That is to take the actual money you bank and divide it by the live weight of the animal prior to loading to give a pence per kg banked for every animal.

Adopting this method of measuring and recording the true value of every animal when sold, then enables you to compare the results of whatever method of sale you choose.

## Key Points

- Use a standard measuring point – LW on farm 24 hours before sale.
- Ensure you understand your target market and its required carcass specification
- Familiarise yourself with premiums and penalties
- If selling deadweight, be sure of the dressing specification used and what deductions are made
- Market your animal at the optimum finish level – too soon and you will forfeit yield and killing out percentage, too late and face penalties for being overweight/over-fat

So the only way to be sure you are receiving the **TRUE VALUE** of producing a **REPEATABLE, ENJOYABLE, EATING EXPERIENCE**, is to record the **LIVE WEIGHT PENCE PER KILOGRAM ACTUALLY BANKED!**

## THE PINK SOIREE

On Friday 13<sup>th</sup> November (unlucky for some!) Meadow Quality held a Pink Soiree lunch to meet their new neighbours at Newhouse Farm Business Centre. The theme was "Wear Something Pink" which was a national event held two weeks earlier, to raise funds for the Breast Cancer Campaign, but we were busy re-locating at that time!. It was a bewildering sight to see our staff wearing a dazzling variety of pink creations (Greg's pink wig was particularly stunning), pink cakes baked by Pam Hands and pink drinks created by Judy Underwood. Lynda Porter's husband, Clive, was the "barbecue king" cooking some truly delicious homemade beef- burgers (definitely not served pink!) and a fun time was had by all!

We are delighted to say that with the help of everyone who attended the lunch, we were able to donate £309.14 to the Breast Cancer Campaign and £135 to the Little Hearts Matter Charity.

## DO YOU RECOGNISE THIS 'MAN'?



Well done to Clive Mahony and his daughter Aimee (she's the good looking one without the hat and the beard!) who joined members of the Market Bosworth Young Farmers Club in a 20 mile fancy dress bike ride to raise money for Age Concern.

We hope he checked his live-weight before leaving home!

## DOVECOTE PARK CARCASS COMPETITION

The annual Dovecote Park Carcass Competition took place on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> October with some notable successes for Meadow Quality producers.

<b>R &amp; J Eyles</b>	Second in Hereford steer class and second in Hereford heifer class
<b>JR &amp; AW Duffin</b>	Fifth in Aberdeen Angus steer class and fourth in Aberdeen Angus heifer class
<b>Claire Leggott</b>	Fifth in Hereford steer class

**Congratulations to all who entered stock for the show!**

## STEVE TIMMS' SUCCESS AT MORETON SHOW

Congratulations to Steve Timms on winning two prizes at the recent Moreton in Marsh Show. Steve's Limousin steer, Dino, born on 30 Sept 2008, achieved a third prize in the Best Potential Christmas Show Steer class and Darcy, a second Limousin steer, born on 18 July 2008 won a third prize in the Best Butcher's Steer class. This was a great achievement as it was the first time either had been to a show!

As something of a specialist in the store stock trading field, it is good to see Steve is putting his skills to good use!

**Steve Timms** can be contacted on **07711 800165**