

**SUMMER  
2025**



# DISCOVER FARMING

## NEWS FOR SCHOOLS

### THE CLASSROOM @ WASHINGPOOL FARM

Local Primary and Secondary Schools are invited to visit the Discover Farming Classroom to learn and experience what is involved in bringing the food they eat to the table as well as gain an understanding of why farming and agriculture is so important to the local economy and environment.

#### NEWS FROM KATIE VINING, DISCOVER FARMING'S EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR



We have welcomed classes from Symondsbury, Burton Bradstock and Sticklands. The pupils have toured the farm, checked up on the cows keeping warm in the shed, fed the rare breed Middle Whites and collected eggs from the many chickens. They have looked into how Washingpool is working towards sustainable farming; reducing the impact of the farm on the environment. Looked into wind power and how to harness and convert this into electrical energy. Some children created their own energy using the classroom bike to make banana smoothies. Two groups cooked up seasonal soup in the afternoon... kale and potato this time! Everyone had a taste of their efforts, the feedback was varied but most liked it! I think it makes a huge difference when you have picked your own ingredients.



#### NEW CHEF ON THE FARM

**Hands-on cooking with Andy Tyrell,** Co-owner and chef at the Soulshine Restaurant in Bridport.

Symondsbury School Year 3/4 accepted the invitation to join us at our very first Chef on the Farm event. Andy designed the day to enable the children to truly experience how they could make and enjoy a delicious feast from local seasonal ingredients.



The menu... Cream cheese • Flat Breads • Beef Kebabs • Stir Fry chard • Pearl barley and chard • Radish, herb and cabbage coleslaw • Nettle & herb pesto • Rhubarb crumble

The children picked and collected the chard, radishes, herbs, rhubarb and nettles from the Washingpool Farm polytunnels and fields. They prepared and cooked the dishes and then all sat down at the end to enjoy eating their feast.

We shall be running this event again next year. Look out for more information and details later in the year.

***"It was a great success!"***

#### FREE VISITS TO THE DISCOVER FARMING CLASSROOM

We already have a good number of schools booked in for this year. Visits are still free for schools in the Melplash 'zone' (12-miles radius from Melplash village church).

If you would like to bring your class on a visit please email me to discuss and/or book a suitable date.

**[katie@discoverfarming.co.uk](mailto:katie@discoverfarming.co.uk)**



## 500 FARMING WORDS COMPETITION RESULTS



We've had another successful writing competition with many entries that really impressed the judges. The judges for the competition were Gemma Harvey from the National Farmers Union (NFU) and Will Bowditch, Melplash Agricultural Society Discover Farming Chairman. Entries were received from seven schools, and over seventy children entered.

**KS1 Winner:** Theo Cox, St.Mary's Primary School, Bridport  
**Runner-Up:** Joseph Dare, Symondsbury C of E Primary School

**Lower KS2 Winner:** Joe Cox, St.Mary's Primary School, Bridport

**Upper KS2 Winner:** Edward Keen, Salway Ash C of E Primary School

**Runner-Up:** Diggory Brock, Salway Ash C of E Primary School

**Schools with the best entries:**

**Winner:** Salway Ash C of E Primary School

**Runner-up:** Beaminster St Mary's C of E Primary School

**Thank you to everyone who took part!**

**Above left:** Diggory Brock and Edward Keen with their class mates, who also entered the competition.

**Above right:** Joe Cox and Theo Cox with James Bowditch (Vice Chairman, Melplash Agricultural Society).

**Below:** Presentation to Salway Ash C of E Primary School. Left to right: Gemma Harvey (NFU), Simon Wakely (Chairman, Melplash Agricultural Society), Diggory Brock, Leif Overment (Headteacher), Edward Keen, and Nigel Jones (Chesters Harcourt).



**We're planning to launch the next 500 Farming Words Competition at this year's Melplash Show and will be opening the competition to both primary and secondary school students for the first time.**

Kindly sponsored by

Chesters Harcourt

## WHAT'S IN THE PIPELINE?



### Expert Day

**Another Expert Day is planned for Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025.**

If your school is interested in attending please drop me an email: [katie@discoverfarming.co.uk](mailto:katie@discoverfarming.co.uk)

## CAREERS IN AGRICULTURE

The Discover Farming Careers team headed up by Melplash Agricultural Society Director, Will Frost, joined twenty other organisations and businesses at the Dorset Career Hub's Careers & Skill Festival held at Kingston Maurward. Over 800 students from Year 8 – Year 12 attended from schools in the Weymouth and Dorchester area.

*"It was great to have agriculture and rural careers being championed" said Will, "I met and talked to lots of young people who were genuinely interested in the careers that are available to them in the vast agriculture sector. We have also attended more locally Wadham School Crewkerne and The Sir John Colfox Academy Bridport talking to students about the exciting opportunities in Agriculture and informing students of our fabulous scholarship programme."*

Following the successful merger with Weymouth College, Kingston Maurward College is now offering General Farm Worker Apprenticeships. 12 students are already signed up. They continue to offer Level 1, 2, 3 and T levels for our young farmers in Dorset.



*"We are very happy that the merger has kept Kingston Maurward College available for our agriculture students. We look forward to working closely with the college to improve access to education in agriculture for us all in West Dorset."*

## DAY IN THE LIFE OF LOCAL FARMER, TIM FRAMPTON, BURSTOCK GRANGE FARM, BROADWINDSOR



### How long has Burstock Grange Farm been the home of the Frampton family?

The farm has been in the family since 1912. It was initially rented by my great grandfather, and the family bought it in 1958.

### Where is the farm and what is it like?

The farm is situated on the outskirts of Broadwindsor between Pilsdon and Lewesdon hills. We have a high rainfall area, getting approximately 45 inches a year which is good for growing grass but being 550ft above sea level we do suffer from fog. The farm is fortunate to have a road running right through the middle, which is part of the Monarch way, one side the soil is limestone brash (a limestone soil with a high stone content), and the other sandy loam.

### Who runs the farm?

The farm is now run by myself, my brother Andrew, and my son Dan. We aim to keep to traditional farming methods where possible.

### What do you farm?

The farm is predominantly a dairy farm; we have a herd of Friesians. The milk produced goes to Barbers Farmhouse Cheddar, now the oldest surviving cheddar-makers in the world, they were established in 1833. We also have some beef cattle, mainly Aberdeen Angus, which we raise to store age and sale. The farm also entertains a flock of breeding ewes, Suffolk x mules which are lambed in February to Texel & Beltex Rams.

### What does your typical day look like at this time of the year?

My typical day starts at 5.45am and finishes around 6.30pm or later.

My day is a mix of animal care, land management and various farm tasks which change depending on the seasons and the weather!



### A day in April 2025

**5.45am** I get up, watch the news and listen to the morning chorus.

**6.00am** I get the cows in and start milking. This is my thinking time and when I plan the day ahead.

**8.30am** I finish milking and clean up behind the cows. I move the strip fed kale fence before letting the cows out.

**9.30am** I go home for my breakfast, usually a bowl of cereal – Weetabix or Shredded Wheat, with hot milk, sugar and cream – followed by a cooked breakfast, kindly cooked by my wife Angela who is a very good cook!

**10.00am** I take the cow manure out and spread it on the fields.

**11.00am** I bag up lamb creep pellets (creep feed is a supplement for young lambs) and go to see the sheep. I also check up on the dry cows.

**12.00pm** I pop to John Bright Fencing for fence posts – I'm busy putting up a fence to keep the sheep in! I go home and place out the posts.

**1.00pm** I go for my lunch and a short nap.

**2.00pm** I give the cows another lot of kale and roll out the sheep netting.

**3.00pm** I take some photos of some capital grant works that was done in the winter ready for submission. We have been in the Countryside Stewardship Scheme for the last 25 years; all internal hedges are in a hedge laying rotation. The capital grants help fund laying ditches and fencing. Photos have to be taken to prove you have done the work.

**4.00pm** I milk the cows again and give each a mobility score. Mobility scoring assesses a cow's ability to move, using a scale from 0 to 3, with 0 being good mobility and 3 being severely impaired mobility. This scoring system helps us identify cows that may be lame or have other mobility issues, allowing for early detection and treatment.

**6.30pm** I go home for a cooked tea with the family, cooked as always by my wife Angela.

**8.45pm** I go to play skittles in the local farmers team who play in the Crewkerne Farmers' Skittle League.

**At midnight** I get home and go to bed!

## SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME 2025

The Scholarship is available to all students aged 16 years and over who live within a 12-mile radius of Melplash Village Church, and who are planning to pursue further education in subjects connected to agriculture for example farming, horticulture, engineering, forestry, ecology, agronomy, veterinary, etc. Visit [www.discoverfarming.co.uk](http://www.discoverfarming.co.uk) to see a full list of careers available in agriculture.

The Scholarship offers financial assistance (up to £3,000 per year) to students to help with their apprenticeships, diplomas or degree courses.

**Closing date for applications is 1<sup>st</sup> July 2025**



**For more details and an application form please visit [www.discoverfarming.co.uk](http://www.discoverfarming.co.uk)**

# DISCOVER FARMING OUT & ABOUT

at **Leaf Open Farm Sunday** **FREE EVENT**  
on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June, 10am – 4pm at Home Farm TA20 4PW



Discover Farming and the Melplash Agricultural Society will be once again joining up with the Marshwood Farmers' Cluster for the annual Open Farm Sunday event at Home Farm, an organic dairy farm, in Thorncombe TA20 4PW by kind permission of Sophie and Tom Gregory.

Join us for a FREE day exploring what life is really like on an organic dairy farm. Watch the cows being milked, learn about how they are cared for, take a tractor and trailer ride around the farm – spot cows grazing in the fields; discover the role of bees in healthy ecosystems and food production; meet other farm animals in the livestock area; enjoy plenty of family-friendly Discover Farming activities and lots more... Visit [www.discoverfarming.co.uk/news/leaf-open-farm-sunday-june-8th-at-home-farm-thorncombe](http://www.discoverfarming.co.uk/news/leaf-open-farm-sunday-june-8th-at-home-farm-thorncombe) for more information.

A great chance to see behind the scenes of a working farm and to celebrate British farming at its best.



at **The Melplash Show** on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> August

The Discover Farming area will as always be packed with lots of interactive farming to food activities for children to explore and find out where their food comes from, how farmers care for the environment, and how the environment and good local food cares for us all.

Entrance to the Show is FREE for all children 16 years and under. Adults £22.50 in advance or £25 on the day.  
**Tickets available at [www.melplashshow.co.uk](http://www.melplashshow.co.uk)**

## FOOD FOCUS CHARD



Chard is a leafy vegetable that is grown on Washingpool Farm. Although it is a popular vegetable across the rest of Europe and the Mediterranean and is in many dishes in Italy and Croatia, it is not eaten widely in the UK. We hope that this feature will encourage more of us to eat this delicious vegetable.

Chard is a member of the beet family. It has a large leaf with a colourful stem ranging from white to yellow, orange, red and purple with mixes in between. It is easier to grow than spinach, it is prolific and can tolerate extremes of temperature. It is also packed with antioxidants and contains high levels of vitamins K, A and C, magnesium, potassium, iron and fibre. More interesting facts on Chard can be found on [www.rhs.org.uk](http://www.rhs.org.uk)

### The best way to cook Chard

Every part of a Chard leaf can be eaten – the leaves and the stems. Young leaves can be eaten raw in salads and the mature leaves can be steamed, boiled, roasted, stir-fried or added to tarts, stews and sauces. It is usual to separate the leaves from their stems before chopping and cooking as the stems take longer to cook.

Chard from Washingpool Farm was a chosen vegetable at our recent Chef on the Farm event. Here is Andy Tyrell's recipe:

### Chard, Lemon & Barley

- 1 bunch of Chard
- 150g pearl barley
- 2/3 cloves garlic sliced thinly or grated
- 1-2 lemons zest and juice
- 1 small onion
- A small bunch of your favourite soft herbs like parsley, chives, dill or basil
- Extra virgin Olive oil

Begin by boiling the barley, it will expand a lot during cooking so allow plenty of space in the pan. Reduce the heat to simmer, season with salt and cook for about 45 mins until tender. Drain and run under cold water to remove excess starch.

Dice or slice the onion and soften on a gentle heat in a wide pan in olive oil until very soft, add the garlic and continue to cook on a low heat. Meanwhile prepare the chard by washing and separating the leaves and stems. Chop the stems and add them into the pan with onion, ideally pop a lid on top and cook on a medium heat so the stems soften, it can be a good idea to add a splash more olive oil to help things along. Once soft add the roughly chopped leaves and let them soften for a minute. Add the barley and warm through on a low heat, add the chopped soft herbs, more seasoning and finish with lemon zest and juice to taste. The barley is best still warm and should be rich with good olive oil and fragrant with the herbs.

***It was deemed delicious by all the pupils even those that don't normally like anything green!!***

The Discover Farming Classroom at Washingpool Farm (DT6 5HP) is situated just outside of Bridport on the B3162 heading towards Salway Ash. The Classroom is part of the educational programme set up and operated by the Melplash Agricultural Society to help educate children about food, farming and the environment. (Charity No 1130201)

[www.discoverfarming.co.uk](http://www.discoverfarming.co.uk)



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