

HARPER ADAMS UNIVERSITY

FUTURE FARM

SHROPSHIRE

Don't forget!

The Future Farm conference is being held on the **13th of December 2024**, at the Weston Lecture Theatre.

Registration is required if you want a free lunch, just scan the QR code here



IN THIS ISSUE

Upcoming events, local news and new starters

Details of some of the upcoming industry events happening in December 2024, latest local news and details of new starters at Future Farm

An insight into the performance of the farm animals

A visual representation of the performance of our animals and how our farm compares to benchmark values

Industry news

The top news stories in October/November 2024, which are relevant to Future Farm

Did you know...

Our monthly section containing general farming facts

Thank you and Feedback

A brief thank you to our readers and details on where you can give feedback

Don't forget to check out our website for more information on the farm at <https://futurefarm.zone/>

Upcoming Industry events:

Truro Primestock Show – 4th December 2024 @ *Lemon Quay, Truro*

Royal Ulster Winter Fair – 14th December 2024 @ *Balmoral Park, Lisburn*

Local news:

- Following the success of the last 2 rounds of meat boxes, the Future Farm Meat boxes were on sale earlier this month ready for Christmas. If you ordered a meat box, then collection will be due w/c 2nd December. However, if you missed out on ordering a meat box this time round, do not worry, individual cuts of meat will soon be available for sale. We will advertise this as soon as the plans are finalised!
- The pig unit at Future Farm were finalists for three awards at the National Pig Awards: Herd Productivity, Indoor Producer of the Year and Unit Manager of the Year. The event was held on Monday 18th November in London and the team were successful in winning the Herd Productivity award for 2024. We would like to extend our congratulations to all on the team for their hard work and dedication, the award is well deserved.

Finally...

You may have noticed a change to the branding of this newsletter. We are currently preparing for the launch of the Future Farm Strategy and as a result, the Farm's branding will change too!

New starters:

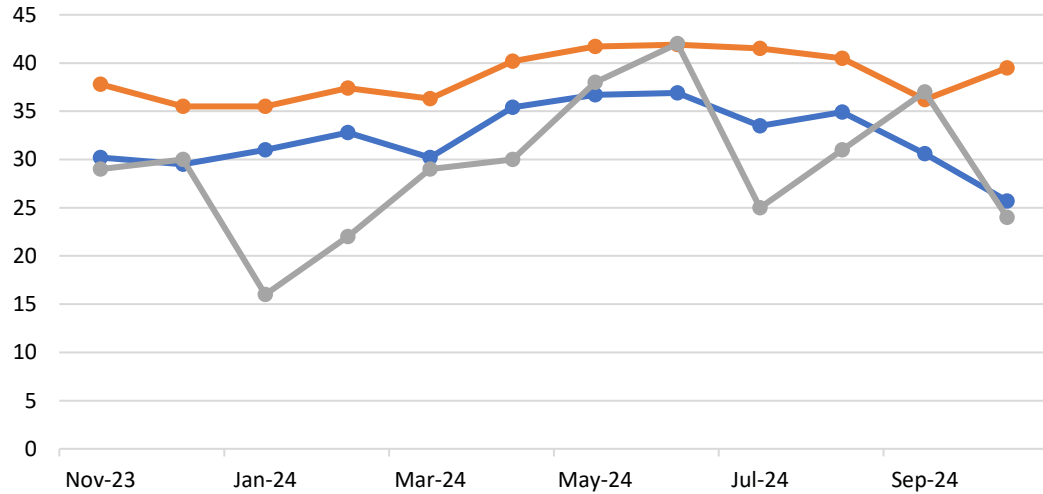
We at Future Farm are pleased to announce the appointment of Geoge Swaine to the position of Technical Science Officer for the Poultry unit. George will be working alongside Charlotte Arthur providing technical support in poultry research.

Congratulations George and we wish you all the luck in the new role.

Future Farm Animal Performance in October 2024:

The Main Dairy milk yield and KPI's in comparison to all NMR recorded herds of a similar herd size (Please note. The data in the graph and screenshot of the KPI table are from Herd Companion)

Herd Production Summary - Main Dairy



	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24
Avg Yield	30.2	29.5	31	32.8	30.2	35.4	36.7	36.9	33.5	34.9	30.6	25.7
Avg Milking Yield	37.8	35.5	35.5	37.4	36.3	40.2	41.7	41.9	41.5	40.5	36.2	39.5
SCC > 200	29	30	16	22	29	30	38	42	25	31	37	24

Benchmark	New	Export
NMR14: Holstein herds > 300 cows	Benchmarks	Export

KPIs	'Worst' <-----> 'Best'	Worst	You	Best	Mean
Milk/Cow/Year of life		4,094	8,403	8,775	5,965
Milk/Cow/Year		6,226	12,212	13,111	9,813
Lactation Yield		5,843	11,794	12,995	9,625
305 Day yield		5,885	10,441	11,713	8,780
Protein/Cow/Year		212	387	429	333
Fat/Cow/Year		274	461	658	418
Ave. Protein %		3.12	3.17	3.77	3.40
Ave. Fat %		3.69	3.78	5.54	4.27
Mean Parity		1.99	2.77	3.53	2.74
Calv. Interval < 385 %		29.17	46.29	79.20	57.16
Ave. Lactation length		385	335	243	309
Ave. SCC		375	162	76	167
% Cows in Parity 1		44.51	24.33	12.00	29.91
Age 1st Calving		957	727	672	781
Ave. Calving interval		460	400	362	392
Ave. Dry days		75	49	31	55
Culling + Death %		63	23	16	32
Ave. No. Cows		275	401	1,229	492

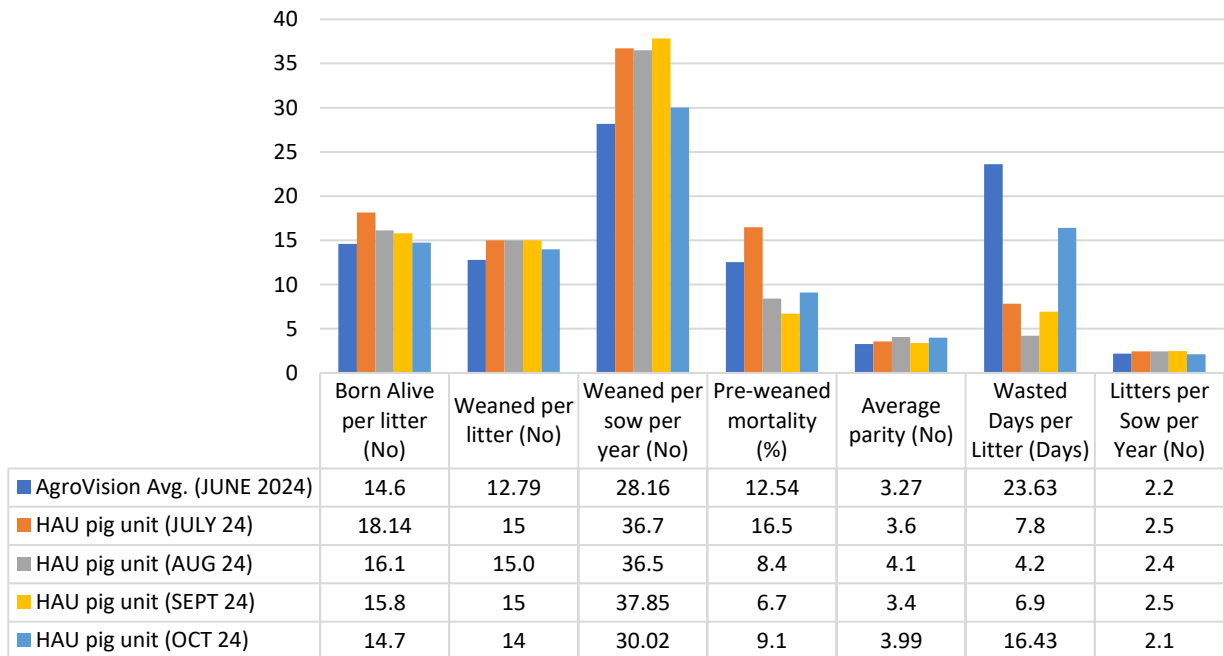
The Main dairy milk quality components in comparison to the Benchmark Muller average

October 2024

	Main Dairy	Muller Average
Avg Bfat (%)	3.77	4.34
Avg Protein (%)	3.17	3.41
Avg SCC ('000/ml)	162	153.6
Avg BAC ('000/ml)	21	21.62
Therms (cfu/ml)	550	666.3
FPD (m*C)	527	

The Pig unit production performance in comparison to the AgroVision Benchmark average (Please note. The AgroVision Benchmark figures are produced on a quarterly basis, for this performance comparison the December 2023 report has been used).

Pig Unit Performance vs AgroVision Benchmark



Blast from the past

Let's look at some photos from the past. Here is an aerial view of Harper Adams University (as previously referred to as The Agricultural College) which is dated 1927. On the right of the image is a view of the portable chicken coops that were part of the first trials conducted by the Agricultural College.



Source: [Britain from Above](http://www.britainfromabove.org.uk)

The image to the right is a landscape view of a small section of the Harper Adams layers trial, the image was taken in the 1920's.





This image was taken to demonstrate the housing of different Guinea fowl varieties which was part of the work conducted by the National Institute of Poultry Husbandry, the image was taken in 1963.

Here we have an image displaying a workshop demonstration of a milking machine unit and plant in January 1969, this image was taken as part of a series of photographs covering the activities at agricultural colleges and institutes in England and Wales.



Industry news:

The threat of the bluetongue virus forced the organisers of the English Winter Fair to cancel the event in late October. This decision was made to prevent bluetongue spreading further west as the border of the restricted zone was 30 miles away from the showground. Late October also saw a change in the general licence for the bluetongue serotype 3 (BTV-3) vaccine, as all livestock keepers in England are now permitted to use any BTV-3 vaccine without needing to apply for a specific licence.

All three available BTV-3 vaccines reduce viraemia rather than preventing it, which means vaccinated animals might still be infected or infectious. Consequently, all movement controls and trade restrictions remain in place for vaccinated animals and movement restrictions apply to all ruminants and camelids, regardless of vaccination status.

As of the 13th of November 2024, a new case of BTV-3 was identified in a cow on the Isle of Wight, this prompted the restriction zone to be extended in England to include the Isle of Wight and part of Hampshire. Whilst the restriction on the two farms in Wales has been lifted due to no further evidence of infection. This brings the total number of cases in Great Britain for the 2024 to 2025 vector season to 159 in England and 2 in Wales.

Even though there are no confirmed cases of bluetongue in Shropshire, the staff at Future Farm continue to monitor all ruminants for signs of the bluetongue virus and will follow the guidelines set by APHA if a case is confirmed on our holding.

A new co-formulated pre-emergence herbicide based on two new active ingredients has been manufactured by FMC, which is expected to be available for autumn 2025 cereal drilling, its launch will offer additional chemistry to pre-emergence herbicides in an integrated weed control programme to help combat resistance in weeds.

One of the new active ingredients in the herbicide is Isoflex (bixlozone) which comes from the isoxazolidine family and works by preventing susceptible weeds from producing carotenoids.

The co-formulation of the Isoflex active with beflubutamid will deliver control and suppression of a very broad range of weeds, including the activity of 21 broad-leaved weeds and four grassweeds. It has been classed as a visual product, as affected weed species show a distinctive pink colouring in the fields when it is taken up by the roots. For now, the herbicide will be approved for pre-, and pre-emergence use in winter wheat, but only pre-emergence in winter barley.

The use of the new herbicide at Future Farm could help the Crops and Operations sector manage and control a broad range of weeds on the farm, and alleviate any resistance that has developed in weed species.

The first budget from the new labour government was announced on the 30th of October by chancellor Rachel Reeves.

Farmers and many organisations are angered by the Labour government plans to reduce agricultural property relief on inheritance tax (IHT) (will take effect from April 2026), increase national insurance costs for employers, and make sweeping cuts to basic payments for English farmers in 2025. This has led to many in the industry organising protests in varying forms such as tractor demonstrations, rallies or petitions to protest the detrimental impact these new measures would have to the UK food and farming sector.

This follows the NFU's recent lobbying efforts during events such as Back British Farming Day on 11th of September and by the NFU Cymru members on the 6th of March.

The current demonstrations, rallies or protest against the proposed changes announced from the budget are as follows:

- Sunday the 17th of November, Welsh farmers staged a tractor convoy protest to coincide with the Welsh Labour Party conference in Llandudno, North Wales.
- Tuesday 19th November from 10am, about 1,800 NFU farmer and grower members gathered at Church House, Westminster, for a mass lobby and meet with their MPs.
- Tuesday 19th November from 10am, a second complementary event (organised by farmers) to the NFU event was held in London to stage a procession but also arrange a massive donation to food banks to feed people who are struggling.
- Tuesday 19th November from 11am, farmers in Herefordshire planned a 'Back British Farming Rally' in Ledbury.
- Thursday 28th November, NFU Scotland held an event at the Scottish parliament at Holyrood, where key issues affecting Scottish agriculture and rural communities were discussed.
- The online petition 'Stop the Family Farm Tax' campaign has more than 180,000 signatures
- The Country Land and Business Association has launched a nationwide campaign to 'defend' family farms and rural business by asking farmers and landowners to sign an online letter opposing the IHT reforms, then responses will be sent to local MPs.
- The Countryside Alliance has launched a mass email campaign urging MPs to 'stand up' for farming families in their constituencies in response to the government's plans to impose new taxes on landowners and working farmers.

The recent changes announced in the budget will impact many people and business in the UK, not just the agricultural industry. If you are struggling with your mental health, please reach out and talk to your GP or call the Samaritans helpline on 116 123 or text 'SHOUT' to 85258 to start conversations with trained volunteers.

Did you know...

Here are some fun facts about our TN70 (Large White x Landrace) sow*:

- Can produce high quantities of milk and has a good maternal instinct
- Easy to manage
- Capable of producing many large and healthy litters
- Produces uniform piglets with high birth weights
- The sow and her offspring are strong, resilient against diseases and free of congenital defects
- Piglets have outstanding growth performance and high efficiency, lowering carbon footprint
- Offspring have lean carcasses and good meat quality



*Source: [JSR genetics](#)

Thank you for reading the Future Farm monthly update newsletter, if you have any feedback or would like to see something in upcoming updates, please send your request to futurefarmenquiries@harper-adams.ac.uk.

We apologise for anyone who made a suggestion for the newsletter and the content you requested was not included. We are doing our best to gather this information for future issues. In the meantime, if you or someone else would like to know more about the farm and our practices, check out our newly updated website <https://futurefarm.zone/>.