

HARPER ADAMS UNIVERSITY

FUTURE FARM

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A brief update on farm activity since the last issue

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Thank you

A brief thank you to our readers

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

Team & Farm Update

New starters & farewells

Three new members of staff have joined the team this month: Ben Wood, Charlotte Lines and Katie Ellam. Ben and Katie have joined the dairy unit as a herds person, while Charlotte will be working primarily with the Met cows. Charlotte has taken over from Olivia Wade, who was placement student to Liam Sinclair.

We would like to thank Olivia for all her hard work and dedication to the beef unit and wish her every success in her final year of studies.

We would also like to extend our thanks to Jacob Morrison for his contribution to the farm. We are grateful for his support with Open Farm Sunday and for the significant task of creating and establishing Future Farm's social media platforms. Thank you, Jacob!

Responsibility for the social media platforms has now passed to Steffan Newell, and we look forward to building on the strong foundations and legacy that Jacob has created.

Ruminant queries

As the new academic year approaches, please direct all ruminant-related queries to Alice Sault or Matt Bolton.

Harvest update

Harvest is complete. In fact, this is the earliest the farm's combinable crops have been harvested in the last 20 years.

While the dry weather has helped make excellent progress, we are now hoping for some much-needed rainfall to support the continued growth of our forage crops.

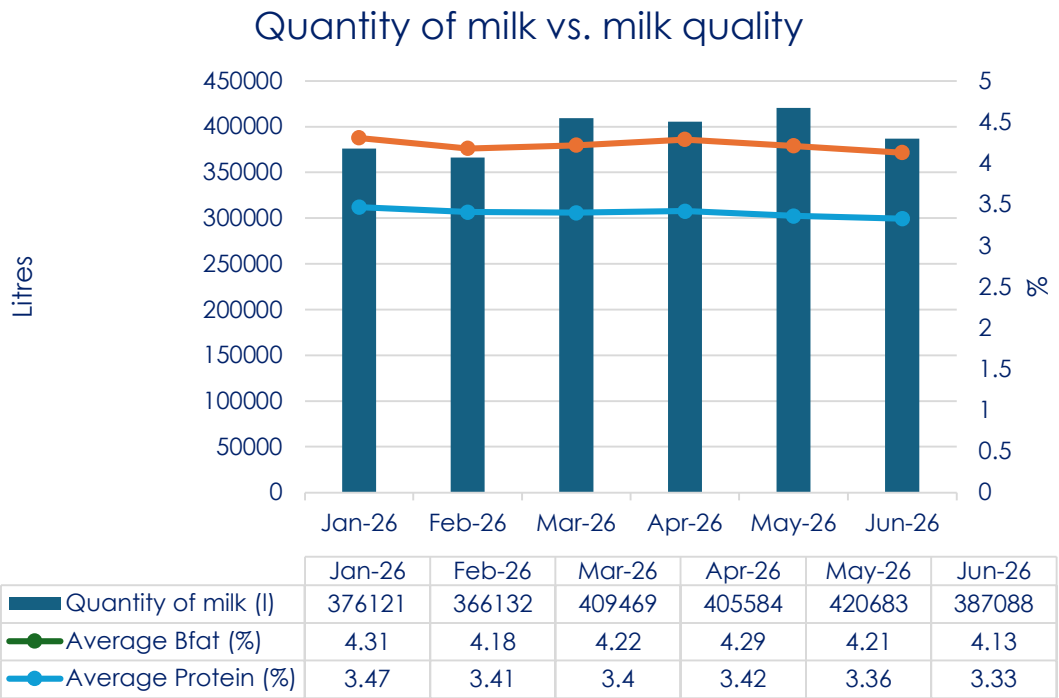
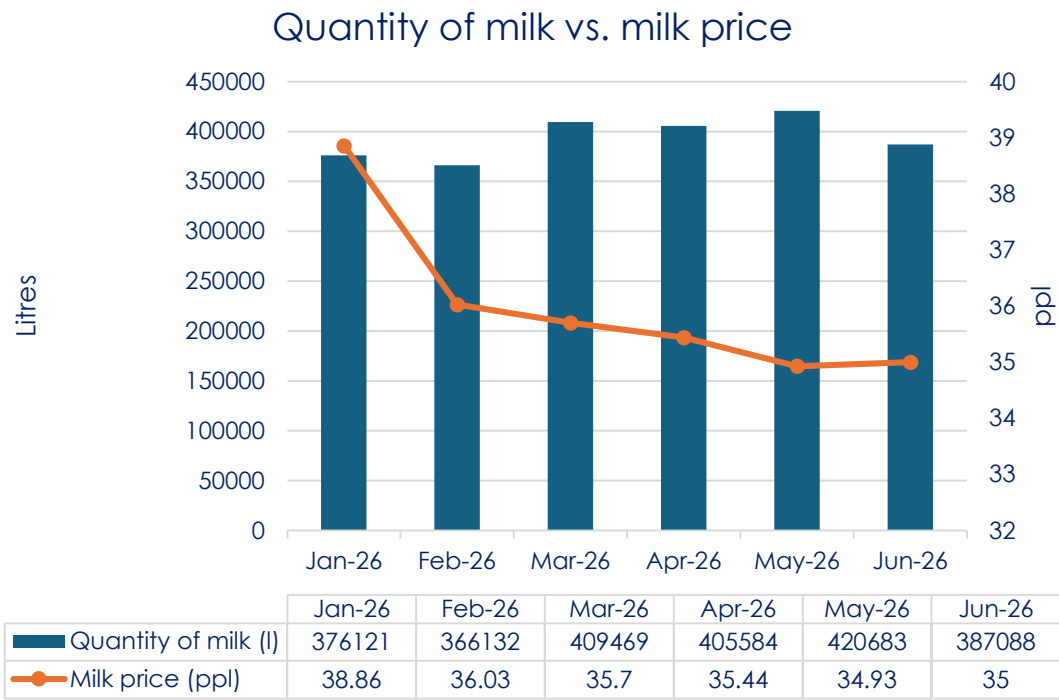
Monogastric update

A new pig building has been constructed on the unit to replace and update the old building. The building has a maximum capacity for 200 weaners, from the age of 4 weeks (8.5kg) to 12 weeks (45kg). The building will be operational later this week, as the first batch of weaners are set to make it their home. We hope they enjoy it!

Poultry is back! The details are being finalised, but we are now working towards a small commercial poultry flock alongside Highbury Poultry. We are excited about the opportunity to bring poultry back onto the farm.

Future Farm Animal Performance in July 2026:

Using the milk statements from Muller, it is possible to collect data on milk quality, quantity and price. Visuals can be created from this data to help demonstrate the performance of our dairy herd.

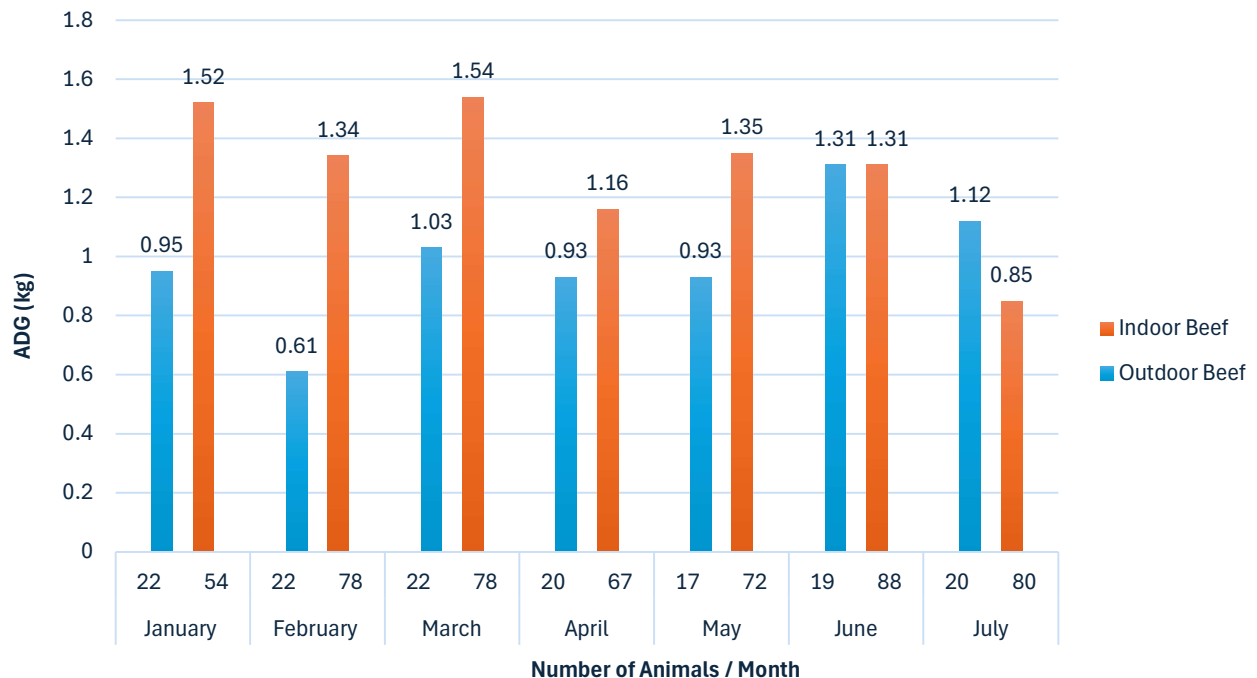


The Main dairy milk quality components in comparison to the Benchmark Muller average.

July 2026

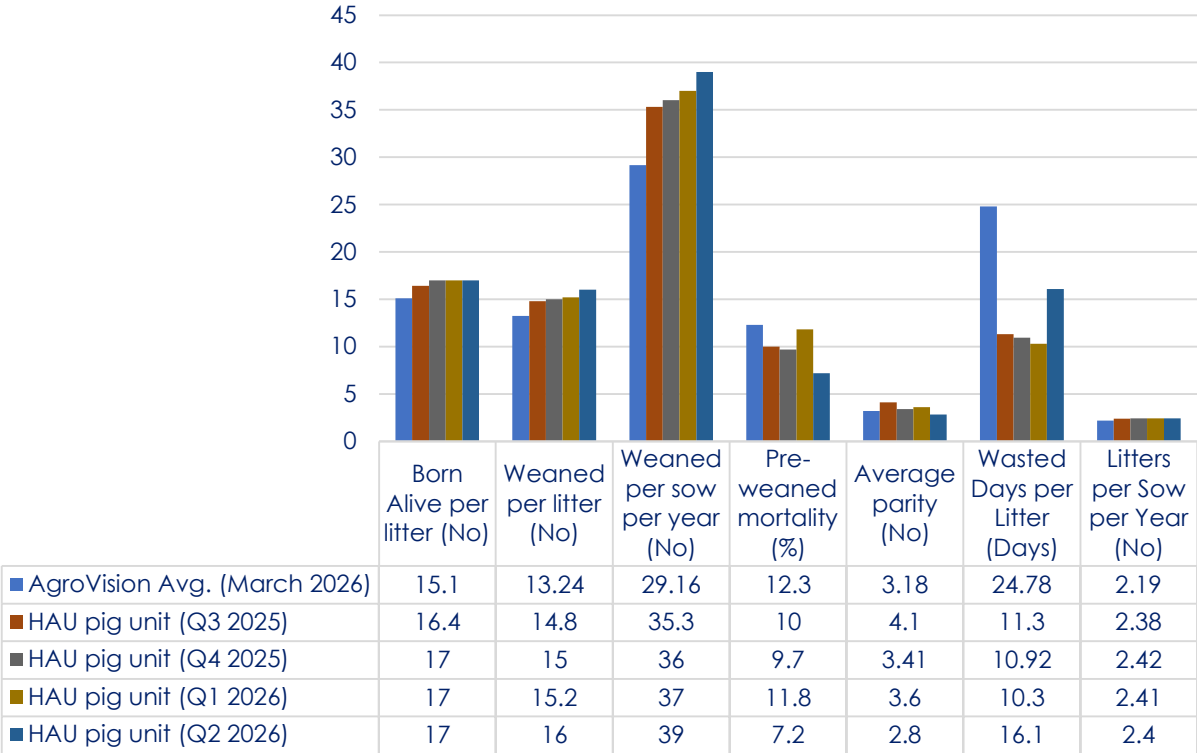
	Main Dairy	Muller Average
Avg Bfat (%)	4.21	4.11
Avg Protein (%)	3.32	3.30
Avg SCC ('000/ml)	92	150.8
Avg BAC ('000/ml)	16	25.45
Therms (cfu/ml)	160	726.7

A monthly comparison of the average daily weight gain (kg) between the indoor and outdoor beef systems.



The quarterly Pig unit production performance in comparison to the AgroVision Benchmark average (Please note that the AgroVision Benchmark figures are produced quarterly; for this performance comparison, the March 2026 figures have been used).

Quarterly pig unit performance vs. Agrovision benchmark



Industry News

Bluetongue Update: Increased Risk for Livestock

Industry and veterinary experts are warning that this year's BTV-3 (bluetongue) outbreak is more severe than in recent years, with some sheep flocks seeing 10–20% of animals affected. The number of confirmed cases is believed to underestimate the true scale of the outbreak due to delays in testing and reporting.

Experts say the virus has successfully overwintered in the UK, while current hot, dry weather is helping drive transmission. Farmers are being urged to remain vigilant, monitor livestock closely for symptoms, and consider vaccination as the best means of protection.

Industry leaders have welcomed the collaborative response from farmers, Defra and APHA, and remind livestock keepers that bluetongue vaccination can provide protection for up to 12 months, with boosters extending immunity.

Dry Weather Continues to Challenge Farmers

While temperatures have eased in recent weeks, the effects of a prolonged spell of dry weather are continuing to be felt across the farming sector. With much of England receiving very little rainfall last month, farmers are facing mounting pressures as water supplies come under strain and crops, livestock and the wider environment feel the impact.

Many growers are working hard to complete harvest while managing reduced water availability, and in some areas restrictions on water abstraction are already affecting crop production. Livestock farmers are also facing challenges, with poor grass growth and disappointing second-cut silage yields leading some to use winter forage stocks earlier than planned.

Experts have warned that the recent heat may have longer-term consequences too, particularly for sheep fertility, with impacts potentially becoming apparent during the autumn breeding season.

The dry conditions have also heightened the risk of wildfires, with several significant incidents reported across England, Scotland and Wales. These fires have threatened farmland, livestock and valuable habitats, serving as a stark reminder of the wider challenges that prolonged dry weather can bring for rural communities and food production.

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 has 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/>.