

Summer News 2018



The cows are filing in for afternoon milking with sunshine on their backs and a light breeze to keep them cool. The farm looks particularly verdant and full of life. The back pasture is hosting a Swallow feeding frenzy as the cows kick up insects on their amble to the parlour and there is a reminder, whichever direction we look, of the benefits of organic farming to all involved – wildlife, cows and people. Let's write the newsletter... the mood is high.

We have another new and handsome face in the herd. Titan is our new 3 year old Aberdeen Angus bull. He joined us this Spring to assist our existing bull Soho, who was struggling to keep 'on top of the job.'



As we are currently growing the herd, we naturally have more heifers than usual. More than double our normal numbers. Titan & Soho are fine fellas and have the job of siring their first calf. An Aberdeen Angus bull produces a good, small, first calf for our heifers. An easy calving for them is important to us. Visitors often say, "What an easy job your bull has!" So why do they need two you may be thinking. Well, bulls need substantial rest periods, well away from any sight of females, to build their interest and desires, otherwise you can quickly find yourself with a fat, lazy bull and no calves on the way. So to facilitate this we need two bulls working in rotation. Between them our heifers are in good hands. Being bulls, Titan and Soho will never meet. Each has his own heifer grazing group. One is North Yorkshire and the other County Durham. No risk of a fracas for us!



New EU data protection legislation comes into force at the end of May 2018 and ALL companies have to identify a lawful basis for holding information and confirm they are gathering, processing and keeping data secure in line with the new EU GDPR regulations. To this end, our lawful basis for controlling and processing your data is a Legitimate Interest and we are pleased to be registered with the new Information Commissioner's Office as a data controller and processor. We take your privacy seriously and use only the data **you provide directly** to us, or our canvasser, when requesting our service to: enable deliveries, payment collection, respond to any customer service issues and share occasional customer newsletters and product lists. We will never sell your personal information. You do not need to take any action, however if you would like to find out more you can find our Privacy Policy under the resources section of our website. <https://www.acorndairy.co.uk/resources>



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'Rinse & Return' for a new generation

Post Blue Planet 2 airing at the end of 2017, we saw a large increase through the spring in demand for organic milk in glass bottles from you. While this was mostly from our existing customer base switching from poly bottles to re-useable glass, we also saw an increase in new customers joining us. At the time we put a post on facebook to highlight the effect of your combined, individual household decisions to switch, which was a reduction of 1.378 tonnes of plastic per year. At this level, you caught some media attention and we were delighted to have some articles in the local press and Facebook went wild!



Well, we can now update this figure. New Acorn Dairy customers and those switching to milk in glass since January are now saving 1.65 tonnes of plastic per year. Your glass bottles average 60.01 round trips from the dairy and back again. You will forgive those hard working bottles that lose their green enamel artwork in time! Of course they are then ultimately recycled by you or us when they break. (We did have one customer a number of years ago, who pulled Graham aside at an open day, to proudly comment that they saved us the cost of recycling the bottles, by doing this for us. After questioning this odd comment, it became obvious they hadn't returned a single bottle. We forget how many months they had been with us at that point! Needless to say both Graham & the customer were horrified at the break down in communications and cost of wasted glass. Assume nothing!) Rinse & return is clearly a new and foreign concept to some of today's modern food consumers.

Of course many of you have ordered your milk in glass from Acorn for the 18 years we have been going. An average household uses four litres a week, which is 106g of plastic. We'll let you do the maths on your personal contributions to plastic reduction.



You could add to this the zero food miles, between farm and processor and the fact that organic farming uses 50% less carbon than non organic, as well as hosting 50% more wildlife and the milk contains 60% more desirable Omega3 fatty acids, then the picture really starts to come together! Organic milk is the best.

The obligatory weather comment corner.

This picture emailed in by a customer says is all! The warm autumn saw the cows grazing into the second week of November- a record. This sadly was followed by a record breaking late spring. The rain and cold weather hampered grass growth. We had been lucky

with our previous year's silage and had plenty of it to feed the cows. (Our silage was in fact awarded the Nickerson Cup in the Durham Grassland Silage Competition earlier this year.)

Turnout 2018 was the latest in memory- on 23rd April. We were delighted some of you could join us to see some happy cow buffoonery. For those that couldn't, Caroline caught it on video- see [website blog](#). Since then Colin and Barry have been managing the frenetic grass growth, created by the sun and warmth. The cows have been moved into a fresh paddock each day to try and keep on top of it and stop it going to seed. Once seeded it becomes harder to digest. **Talk of cutting for silage is frequent.**

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Fresh organic milk direct from the farm

We mention many team members by name on your bill notes or facebook & thought you may find some faces over the course of the next few newsletters of interest. Kicking us off is your farm team who, assisted by Andrew & Bill at weekends, attend to every aspect of cow and calf care and milking. Their days start at 5am when milking and can finish at 10pm (or later) after all animals are settled for the night. L-R **Colin, Tom, Barry** (Herd Manager), **Elle & Wes** are professionals in their field who enable us to produce high quality milk and maintain industry leading welfare standards. You see before you a crack unit.



2018 marks 90 years of Tweddles farming at Archdeacon Newton! Our Great Grandparents came in 1928 & with their 3 sons & 6 daughters, established a mixed farm with many species & crop varieties. Of course all this was 'organic' in those days anyway. Milk was delivered by horse & cart (not pasteurised or chilled) & was ladled out by the sisters, into the various containers the housewives brought out for them to fill. The horse knew which houses to stop at! In the 1940s, Lilian & Doreen came as Land Army Girls to help on the farm & in time married two good looking brothers, Philip & John (just like in the films.) Grandfather John then took on a neighbouring farm in the village and in time formed a partnership with his son Gordon. This saw the farm become a pure dairy farm and a period of intensification through the 70s and 80s using the best of modern science and farming techniques & machinery. Tumbling milk prices paid by larger dairies in the 1990s, led Gordon and his son Graham to realise organic farming was the only way forward for us to have a sustainable farm, through delivering the best milk to you directly. So there you go - a potted history of our last 90 years as local food producers. What will the next 90 years bring? Well, let's get through Brexit first!

If you find it useful to have some other items delivered with your milk, you can order these to come with your Acorn Dairy milk...

- Eggs
- Yoghurt
- Butter
- Bread
- Cheese
- Fruit juices
- Muesli / Granola
- Water

Ask for a price list or see our website for info.

We have just lost our local bank branch. We know many of you feel our anguish on this front. **If you are able to pay us by direct debit please do.** Payments vary to reflect the exact value of your deliveries & are taken on the 14th of each month, for the previous month's deliveries. On the reverse of this page you will find a Direct Debit Mandate and Guarantee to return to us to set these up. (More than 2600 customers now choose this method of easy payment.)

Request: **Please** always give your name & address in voice messages, emails & paperwork. For your amusement, we have 7 customers living at 'Rose Cottage', 47 Smith households & 27 Robinsons! You keep us on our toes with any anonymous communications. THANK YOU.

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Thank you for your custom.
Graham & Caroline