

## WHERE WE ARE

Whitmuir Farm is on the A701, 4 miles south of the Leadburn Inn and 2 miles north of West Linton, approximately 15 minutes from Peebles and 20 minutes from Hillend, Edinburgh by car.

## SAVING ENERGY

Over the winter we will be reviewing the way we use resources on the farm and looking at how we can tread more lightly. We are starting by recycling the heat from the refrigeration in the butchery to provide hot water for cleaning.

We will also be exploring renewable energy options including solar panels, wind turbines, a ground source heat pump and wood.

## NEXT STEPS

In October the new access road will be opened to the north of the steading. This will provide much safer access to and from the farm.

We are still tinkering with the butchery plans, but hope to make a start on building by November, ready to open for business early in the new year.

## HOW IT WORKS

Farm supporters pay by regular standing orders. We let supporters know what we have available. Supporters order the food they want, when they want it and we charge it to their account. Every three months we balance the accounts. It is that simple.

You get fresh, organic food at a good price. We grow for people we know and have some certainty of income.

Farm supporters can also regularly visit the farm to see what's going on. They are invited to information sessions and farm events.

WHITMUIR  
ORGANICS  
FOOD WITH ATTITUDE NOT ADDITIVES

PIGMAIL  
OCTOBER 2006



## IS IT JUST ME, OR ARE THE WINTERS SHORTER?

Recently published research by SNIFFER (Scotland and Northern Ireland Forum for Environmental Research) confirms that the average spring, summer and winter temperatures in Scotland have risen by more than 1°C since 1961. On average, the growing season in East Scotland is over 30 days longer, with spring starting three weeks earlier (around March 20th) and winter arriving 10 days later (around 20th November). In parts of West Scotland, the change has been even greater.

The combination of higher temperatures with a longer growing season means that 'growing degree days' have also increased by over 20% on average across Scotland (and by over 80% in some northern and northwestern areas). Different crops have different growing degree day requirements, so more growing degree days means a wider range of crops can be grown. Don't expect bananas any time soon in Lamancha, though maybe blackberries and apples will become a regular feature.

But there's a downside:

"Further global warming of 1°C defines a critical threshold. Beyond that we will likely see changes that make Earth a different planet from the one we know...another decade of business-as-usual carbon emissions will probably make it too late to prevent the ecosystems of the north from triggering runaway climate change." Jim Hansen, director of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies.



GROWING FOR PEOPLE WE KNOW

Whitmuir Farm  
Lamancha  
West Linton, EH46 7BB  
T. 01968 661 908  
E. handerson@onetel.net



### HOW THE VEGETABLES DID

It's been a great year for learning, and it's not over yet. We've mentally put things into 4 boxes:

**Bad timing** - too many, and then not enough (or vice versa): lettuce, rocket, spinach.

**Production glitches** - tomatoes (blight), parsnips (sown too thin), squash, pepper and aubergine (planted too late), celeriac (poor germination) coriander (too dry) and broad beans (black fly).

**Too much of a good thing** - white cabbage, courgettes, chard, french beans, cucumbers.

**So far, so good** - onions, carrots, potatoes, broccoli, savoy, red cabbage, leeks, fennel, beetroot, strawberries, blackcurrants, gooseberries, cauliflowers, celery, runner beans, swede, sprouts, kale.

As long as box 4 has more in it than all the other boxes, we're happy.

### NEW ARRIVALS

Twenty five ewe lambs and five bullocks have arrived from Kathleen Lyon's organic farm in Yetholm. The ewe lambs are to replace ewes which have died naturally during the year or are too old to manage another pregnancy. We're trying two new breeds - pure Cheviots and Zwartble crosses.

Four of the bullocks are Aberdeen Angus crosses, and the other is a Welsh Black. They will be providing great beef from December onwards.

We've also brought in four purebred Tamworths from Clementina Adams farm in Fife. The gilts are for breeding. We'll compare the boars with our existing pigs which are a cross between a Tamworth and a white commercial boar. If the pure Tamworths do as well or better, we'll switch to a Tamworth boar.

Tamworth pigs are reckoned to produce the best-tasting pork and bacon, and are ideally suited to the outdoor life, being directly descended from forest pigs. One story is that Robert Peel imported them from Ireland (where they were called Irish grazers) to his estate in Tamworth in Staffordshire. Once very popular as a backyard pig, they went out of favour as they do not suit intensive indoor systems and they are still on the 'endangered' list of the Rare Breeds Survival Trust.

We also borrowed a Shorthorn bull this year instead of a Limousin. Shorthorn cattle, like Aberdeen Angus, produce marbled beef and are well-suited to an organic system where they grow slowly on grass and silage. Limousins are traditionally leaner and are often used in more intensive systems which rely on feeding large amounts of grain.



### ORDER NOW

The turkeys are growing fast - order yours now! Organic beef, lamb, pork, eggs and seasonal vegetables also available.

