

MEADOW QUALITY

LIVESTOCK TRADING SINCE 1975



THE STANDARD | FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY EDITION



Cattle

How Meadow Quality has helped one cattle producer improve performance



Pigs

Forty years of security and commitment



Sheep

Save time and money at our Sheep Collection Centres



Calves

Meadow Quality proud to support BVDFree England Scheme



Looking forward to the next forty years!

To continue to adapt and change in the world of livestock farming is key as to why Meadow Quality is rightly proud to celebrate its 40 years in business this year.

Throughout this edition of The Standard there are several references to the past 40 years, and it is often good to reflect on the times gone by, and the many ups and downs that the industry has experienced over this period of time.

However, it is vitally important to continue to thrive in the future. At Meadow Quality we continue to encourage a collaborative approach to livestock marketing within our

members and producers and to provide a clear way for producers to increase their profitability and mitigate against competition.

The increasing importance of developing supply chains of British produce increases all the time in modern food production. This is equally important whichever farming enterprise you choose to operate in. Whether you are in an intensive or extensive livestock farming enterprise, the principals of buying and selling stock well and striving to improve management, measurement and performance of your farm stock will still ultimately determine how successful your future will be.

By utilising the advice and skills of the Meadow Quality staff in the procurement and marketing of your stock, this can assist you in creating that successful and secure future that all producers are looking for.

I also would like to take this opportunity to mention both the staff and the Non-Executive Farmer Directors on the Board of MQL, who are all dedicated to working alongside so many excellent British producers for the benefit of all. I trust the business continues to serve its membership and producers well, and if we continue to do this we too can look forward to the next 40 years with a good deal of optimism.

Matt Nightingale Chief Executive Officer



James and Helen Bodman

James started the home farm in 1988 from a greenfield site, near Devizes in Wiltshire. Beginning with 25 sows, the business has now expanded to 640 sows and is currently finishing 300 pigs a week, with all pigs cared for under a straw based, high welfare, no infeed/water anti-biotic ethos.

After being unable to expand beyond their 7 acre site, in September 2010 James and Helen bought a derelict pig unit in Hampshire. Here they are relishing the challenge of re-generating the site into a modern unit. It has also enabled them to take the next step and install a 60 place freedom farrowing PigSafe system and become RSPCA assured at this site. All feed is milled on site at both farms and fed via a wet feed system.

James says "To maintain our low disease, high health status, all replacement sows are bred on farm and we follow a strict bio-security protocol. The units run solely on straw kennels with no slats. The pigs have copious amounts of straw for bedding, play and environment enrichment, whilst the kennels offer a warm, dry and draught free environment".

James comments "We have sold our pigs through Meadow Quality for over 20 years. They are regular visitors to our farm and have a good understanding of the operation of our units and the particular ethos under which we operate. This has enabled them over the years to achieve the best returns possible for us, either by seeking out and initiating new and better markets for the sale of our

pigs or negotiating to gain the best price possible from our existing contracts, both during the good times and the bad. We have seen Meadow Quality fight our corner with processors on many occasions, sometimes going above and beyond what you would traditionally expect from a Marketing Group. We appreciate the service we receive from them and would highly recommend them to any pig producer."

To find out more about James and Helen's farm, have a look at the video about their production facilities on our website at www.meadowq.co.uk/Testimonials



Matthew Banks 18 Years Not Out!

Matthew joined Meadow Quality back in 1998, and is involved in marketing cattle and sheep, mainly in the North West, and in marketing pigs, covering a number of northern counties.

He is a farmer's son from Hutton in Lancashire and began work as a management trainee in 1989 for Preston Farmers, the largest farmer owned feed company at that time, after completing an HND in Agriculture at Myerscough College. He was put through his paces during training in a number of divisions within the business before finally settling down in a completely new venture for Preston Farmers in livestock marketing.

This was not only a good career move for Matt, it was also a good life move as he started dating Claire, his wife, whilst he was at Preston Farmers, and they married in 1994. They now have three very likely lads in tow and in his spare time Matt enjoys watching them play league football. Somehow, he also manages to find time to run a farm rearing store cattle!



Matt feels that his move to Meadow Quality was a very positive one and is quick to point out the forward thinking nature of the company, its use of IT to improve and speed up communications with farmers and fieldstaff alike and its ability to provide an all round marketing service for all livestock species.

Matthew can be contacted on 07715 537 006





Forty years of security and commitment

While there are few certainties in pig production and UK livestock farming generally, the level of uncertainty affecting us all has increased significantly in the past couple of years.

In addition to the day to day challenges of efficient, high welfare pig production, following the Brexit decision British farmers are still left with some degree of long-term uncertainty. Currently the weaker pound and production rationalisation across both Europe and the UK is making British pork very competitive and therefore supply and demand has switched back in favour of pig farmers for now as prices continue to rise. Although the weaker pound helps both the home market and export sales develop, imported feedstuffs have become more expensive. With this in mind continued British pork product promotion and capitalising on developing key export markets like Asia must remain a real focus for the British pig industry.

Throughout these uncertain times, a 100% farmer owned business such as Meadow Quality continues to accept and embrace the changes that these industry environments provide. The Pig Team continues to work with producers, butchers and abattoirs to market stock through a professional level of understanding of the whole industry. This marketing service helps to provide a range of choices to balance out some of the vagaries of the market to sell the right pigs at the best price to the right buyer.

“Working together to do a better job than as individuals,” was the statement by the founding group of farmers when Meadow Quality started in 1975. Who would have guessed all these years later that national coverage would be achieved by a team of passionate individuals continuing to offer options and choices through innovative thinking and lining up synergies between businesses and individuals?



Meadow Quality is embracing the future by investing in a new IT system from Hellenic Software which will further improve data reporting to customers, with more scope to compare pig statistics between plants, thus allowing us to seek out the best returns and correct contracts for farmers.

The Hellenic system provides advanced functionality to manage, analyse and report animal data. Input from the farm and abattoir is combined to provide grade, health and price analysis over selected time periods. Automated load statistics and monthly reports are provided direct to our customers’ smart phones.

Despite the recent challenging times, Simon Davies, Meadow Quality Commercial Director, is optimistic about the future. He says “I believe that protein, given the world’s growing population, will continue to be in strong demand. The political influencers in the world should never lose sight of the fact that it is food that fuels dialogue and discussions in everyone. In my view, the farming industry has a good future, and Meadow Quality is well placed to help its farmer members and allies, through continued strong relationship building across the supply chain, for another 40 years’ service working together”



Pig and Poultry Fair 2016

Meadow Quality was delighted to exhibit at the Pig & Poultry Fair at Stoneleigh in May, after an absence of some years.

The Fair gave us an opportunity to showcase our new and exciting tradestand design and for our Pig Team to welcome customers old and new to discuss the pig marketing opportunities which Meadow Quality can offer to producers.

There was a stream of visitors throughout the two days of the show, with a bumper entry to the competition to win a Meadow Quality bodywarmer. The lucky name picked out of the hat was Sam Malton of Moorlands Farm who has recently received his prize!





CHANGES TO TB RULES | TB rules changed on 6th April 2016.

In order to further reduce the risk that TB-infected cattle moving from higher TB incidence areas of Great Britain could transmit the disease to herds in the Low Risk Area (LRA), anyone buying cattle from the High Risk or Edge areas onto a holding in the Low Risk Area must organise a post-movement test within 60-120 days of the movement.

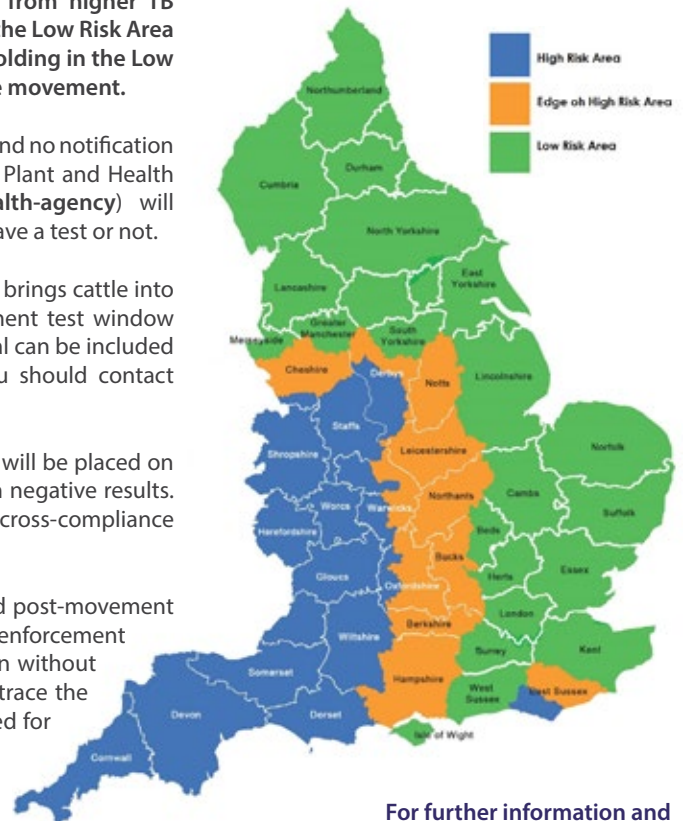
It will be your responsibility to ensure that you comply with TB testing rules and no notification will be provided as to when you need to a post-movement test. Animal Plant and Health Agency (www.gov.uk/government/organisations/animal-and-plant-health-agency) will be able to provide advice if you are not sure whether an animal needs to have a test or not.

As this is a private test, the cost will normally be borne by the person who brings cattle into the Low Risk Area from higher TB risk areas. However, if a post-movement test window corresponds with your routine herd test or whole herd test, then the animal can be included in this government funded test. To arrange a post-movement test, you should contact your vet.

If a cattle keeper fails to carry out a post-movement test, then restrictions will be placed on the receiving herd until all the moved animals have been skin tested with negative results. The post-movement TB test will be regarded as overdue, which may trigger cross-compliance penalties.

If cattle have been moved off to a new herd before undergoing a required post-movement test, then this would constitute an offence under the Animal Health Act and enforcement action may taken against the owner of the herd who had moved cattle on without the legally required post-movement test. In addition, APHA would then trace the animals to their new holding and place them under restrictions until tested for TB with negative results.

The post-movement test rules also apply to young calves brought into the Low Risk Area from other parts of England and Wales; a post-movement test must be completed within 60 to 120 days of arrival. By that time, the calves will be eligible for TB testing, even if calves under 42 days are not pre-movement TB tested.



For further information and advice, contact Simon Fryar at Meadow Quality on 07703 563 787

Accelerated Rearing made easier

By Gill Dickson, National Calf Specialist at Wynnstay (Agricultural Supplies) Limited

Many calf rearing issues are caused by having too many feet on the ground. Thin them out and a lot of health problems disappear. Getting the calf off to a good start, putting a good back on him and keeping him scour free are all important in the first few weeks of life.

The calf should have 4 litres of good quality colostrum in the first 6 hours of life, continuing to feed colostrum twice a day for 3-5 days. Calves at this age are time consuming and will do better on 3 meals rather than on 2. A big hungry calf will take up to 4 litres in one sitting, so will drink a maximum of 8 litres per day on a twice a day system. The feed conversion at this stage is extremely efficient, with a 2: 1 feed conversion averaged over the first 40 days.

If you want your calves to grow even faster, as they would on a cow, a new feeder is now available. The Heatwave milk warmer allows a bulk supply of either cow's milk or milk powder to be mixed up once/day, the calves then help themselves to the ad lib milk supply. As the calf sucks on the teat, the milk passes through a heat exchanger and the calf drinks it warm from the teat.

The feed is available on a 'little and often' basis all day. Calves will help themselves as and when they are hungry and will drink up to 12-15

litres a day, growing at over a kilo/day. The smaller the meals the calf consumes, the less he will scour. The more calories the calf drinks, the better his ability to fight disease and keep warm. The more milk he drinks the faster he will reach the target weight and many bull calves will be ready to go at 3 weeks old. This fast moving system reduces stocking density in the shed, allowing more space for heifer calves and better calf health all round.



The Heatwave milk warmer won the Innovation award at the Livestock Event in July 2015 and is available from Wynnstay and selected stockists. It feeds up to 30 calves or 50 lambs and is affordable at £385+VAT.

Praise for the Heatwave Milk Warmer

"This Heatwave Milk Warmer from Wynnstay is key. Get 4 litres of colostrum into the calves and stick them on it. Job done."

Rob Cooke, Clotton Hall, Cheshire

"We are pleased with the Heatwave. Feeding this way has improved the quality of our calves by 2 grades. They have a nice bloom and shine to their coats."

Neil Lewis, Kingsmarsh Holsteins, Cheshire

www.heatwavemilkwarmer.com





Meadow Quality proud to support BVDFree England Scheme

Bovine Viral Diarrhoea or BVD is a highly contagious viral disease of cattle. It is one of the biggest disease issues facing the UK cattle industry, estimated to cost between £13 and £31 per affected cow.

BVDFree England is an industry-led scheme designed to eliminate the BVD virus from all cattle herds in the country by 2022. It will develop a national database, storing individual and herd test results for scheme members. BVDFree is based on achieving

the elimination of BVD through identification and removal of animals persistently infected (PIs) with BVD.

Meadow Quality is pleased to be involved in the scheme and is offering a facility at both its Ash, Shropshire and Chippenham, Wiltshire Calf Collection Centres to screen your calves for BVD!

£6 per head will guarantee that your calves are not persistent infectors!



Our guide to using a BVD testing kit...

- 1 Sample taken from calf's ear with white button tag.
- 2 Sample removed from button tag and put into test vial.
- 3 Buffer is added to vial and left to soak for minimum of 5 minutes.
- 4 Vials soaking for 5 minutes.
- 5 Sample is taken out of vial and added to test kit.
- 6 Test kit.
- 7 Test kit showing control line. 15 minute wait for results.

Full details and information on BVDFree England can be found at www.bvdfree.org.uk or call **0333 241 3113**.

To find out more about how Meadow Quality can help you...

Contact Adrian Bowen on **07736 056712** or Julian Dale on **07714 32169**



Save time and money at our Sheep Collection Centres

Meadow Quality runs two collection centres which are used as an efficient means of marketing large numbers of lambs from many smaller producers.

The centres usually start running from the beginning of June each year when sufficient numbers of new season lambs are ready to go to the processors from farms throughout the Leicestershire area. They continue operating until Christmas.



Both centres run on a Thursday (subject to sufficient numbers being available) – farmers deliver their lambs into the centres themselves or, for larger consignments, transport can be arranged by Meadow Quality.

The batches of lambs are then loaded on to an artic for onward transport to the processing plant.

ADVANTAGES OF USING OUR COLLECTION CENTRES...



- Lambs are matched to the processor's requirements
- Large batches can be grouped together, saving transport costs
- Producers gain a market advantage
- A quick and easy system of marketing stock is in place
- The value that your stock achieves is maximised
- Payments are secure

One of our collection centres is located at Quebec Farm, Sileby which is run by Peter Astill, a Meadow Quality producer for over 25 years. The second is at Kilby Grange, Kilby which is run by Bob Adams, a Meadow Quality producer since 1992, so you will benefit from years of experience!

If you are in the Leicestershire area and would like to book lambs into one of the Collection Centres, call Gordon McWhirter on 07703 563 788 on a Monday with details of the number and type of lambs, which collection centre is preferred and whether they will be delivered or transport needs to be organised. Confirmation of the time of delivery at the centre, together with price and the processing plant to which they will be going will be provided at the time of booking in. Grading sheets will be sent to you no later than the Monday following.

For more information on the Collection Centres, on our autumn sheep buying services or in fact anything "sheep", contact the "Meadow Quality sheep guru", Gordon McWhirter, and take advantage of his 25 years experience with us. **Gordon can be contacted on 07703 563 788.**

Meadow Quality Producer, Phil Hodgskiss Relives 1966 Glory

Phil Hodgskiss with some of his herd of Herefords





How Meadow Quality has helped one cattle producer improve performance

18 month old Angus cattle

Michael Tims Farm, near Banbury, first started marketing their cattle through Meadow Quality in 2001 and has been working with Meadow Quality Livestock Marketing Specialist, Clive Mahony, ever since.

It has proved to be a very successful relationship for both parties.

The farm has been in the Tims family for five generations and now concentrates on beef and arable, although they did keep dairy cows until 1990. They grow as much of their own feed as possible for the cattle, ensuring traceability and only buy in absolute essentials.

Michael and son Edward now concentrate on producing Aberdeen Angus cattle by registered sires for the Dovecote Park Scheme, buying in batches of calves every seven weeks from Meadow Quality and growing them on to finish at around 24 months.

Michael explained that Clive Mahony and Meadow Quality have helped them make many improvements to their system along the way, including advice from ventilation expert, Jamie Robertson which eliminated draughts and improved air exchange in the cattle sheds,

dramatically reducing the incidence of pneumonia.

In addition, Meadow Quality has been instrumental in arranging assistance with nutrition and feeding from Keenan.

Analysis of calf health and performance led to adjustment of the buying programme of calf batches. There are now no calves purchased that are born in the month of August as calves born in this month seem to struggle healthwise later on.

Edward Tims had particular praise for the Meadow Quality Health Plan provided by vets Lambert Leonard and May which had helped them identify a particular strain of pneumonia, thus ensuring the most effective and appropriate antibiotics were prescribed.

Michael Tims comments "Not only have Meadow Quality provided an excellent marketing outlet for our finished cattle since 2001, the advice and support from their Livestock Marketing Specialist, Clive Mahony, has proved invaluable and enabled us to continually improve and expand our cattle enterprise".



Improvements to cattle sheds to eliminate draughts following advice from ventilation specialist, Jamie Robertson



The latest batch of reared calves settled in their shed

Phil Hodgskiss, dairy farmer from Rugeley, Staffordshire and long time Meadow Quality customer, shares his memories of the England World Cup victory in 1966 – he was there!

Securing tickets early on for the preliminary rounds at Villa Park with his late father, Reg and family friend Alan Francis, meant that their names were entered into a raffle, giving them the chance to buy tickets for the final. Two of their names were drawn out and Alan generously agreed to let Phil and his father apply for the tickets and they bought them for the princely sum of one pound and five shillings (£1.25 in case you can't remember that far back) each!

On the day of the final, Phil and his father milked their cows in the early morning and set off for Wembley, aiming to be back in time for the evening milking by 7 p.m. at the latest.

Phil remembers the atmosphere at Wembley Stadium – "the noise from the crowd was terrific. When the band came on the pitch at half-time, I couldn't hear a note!" He and his father were busy counting down the seconds to full time, needing to make a swift exit to get back to milk the herd, but had not counted on a last minute equaliser from Germany, leading to extra time.

However, all's well that ends well, and after Geoff Hurst's two goals in extra time sealed a famous victory for England, they headed back to Rugeley, arriving home about 9 p.m. and milked their 50 cows in the fading light of an amazing day. "It was a great day and a great memory" says Phil. "I was completely hoarse the next day – in fact, I couldn't speak for three days!"

Phil still has the programmes from the preliminary rounds and the final and the ticket stubs and rosette that he wore at the final – what an amazing tale!

MEADOW QUALITY

40
1975-2015

MEADOW QUALITY IS FORTY!

Some highlights of our 40 years in business

1975

Meadow Valley Livestock Limited established on 19th December

1983

Warwickshire Quality Calves formed

1985

Clive Mahony, Livestock Marketing Specialist, joins

1986

Alison Parker, now Pig Admin Manager, joins

1990

Gordon McWhirter, Sheep Specialist, joins

1989

Mary Creswell, now Credit Control, joins



1987

Meadow Quality wins NFU marketing award

1992

Jayne Field, Transport Co-ordinator, joins

1999

Meadow Premier set up with a focus on traceable, higher provenance beef

2000

Meadow Quality takes over Peak District Beef and Lamb

2001

Foot and mouth outbreak



2015

Meadow Quality celebrates forty years in business

2012

Meadow Quality merges with Graig Producers, organic livestock marketing co-operative

2009

Meadow Quality's new head office in Warwickshire opened by BBC Countryfile's Adam Henson

2002

Meadow Valley Livestock and Warwickshire Quality Calves merge